Welcome, or welcome back, to the Department of Earth Sciences and the University of Oxford!

We hope that your time as a research student in the Department of Earth Sciences will be enjoyable and scientifically fruitful.

Changes Since 2022-23 v1.0

Library Training, Graduate Mini Conference, Submitting a Copy of your Thesis to the Library, Office Space, Confirmation of DPhil Status, SharePoint links updated throughout

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Introduction

Welcome to the Department of Earth Sciences, which is part of the Division of Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS). The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information about the way the department operates key stages in progressing towards your DPhil degree, financial matters and pastoral care. If there are any questions you still have please ask someone. Emma Brown, the Academic Administrator, Claire Rylatt, Administrative Officer (Academic), and Liz Crabbe, Academic Support Assistant, are here to help you, but anyone in the department - other research students, postdocs and members of staff - will be happy to answer questions about the department and university.

DPhil

Most postgraduate students in the department are working towards a DPhil, which usually takes 3.5 to 4 years. There are a number of paths towards the DPhil, as outlined in the sections below.

NERC DTP in Environmental Research

In recent years, the largest group of DPhil students is made up of those on the Natural Environment Research Council’s Doctoral Training Programme in Environmental Research. This programme provides a multidisciplinary training environment for the next generation of researchers working at the frontiers of Environmental Science. The annual cohort will comprise roughly 30 students, 24 of whom will be Research Council funded, with the remainder supported by university and college scholarships and non-academic Partners.

Students will be admitted to one of the three streams of the DTP and will develop their research project in any relevant area during their first 2-3 months of study. During this period, they will receive intensive, cohort-wide training, which will include a 3-day residential field course, development of a common skills toolkit through a series of core cross-cohort courses, training in research and transferable skills, seminar and discussion groups and a termly public lecture programme.

Students will receive support as they develop their research proposal during the first term, months 1-3. During months 4-12 students embark on their research projects. By the end of year 1, students will complete a review of the state-of-the-art in their chosen research area and will present their research and a research plan at the end of year conference. Students will carry out their research projects in a chosen department. They will gain their DPhil from the department, although the DTP will continue to provide support, training, career development and networking opportunities.

The DTP will use a student-centred approach to teaching delivery. Training will progress in three phases, developing from core skills sets to those specific to the student’s projects. In the first term, students will be trained as a single cohort, and all students will participate across the full breadth of training activities. Students will each be supported by a Course Tutor who will act as an independent advisor throughout their first year of study. During this time, students will work on their research proposal, the outline of which should be complete by the end of month 3.

Thereafter training will be both cross-cohort and in streams. Students will also be able to sign up for classes on the GAP academic programme to provide an individually tailored training programme for each student.

Each year around 8 DTP students usually choose to join the Department of Earth Sciences.

Further information about the DTP can be found on their website (www.environmental-research.ox.ac.uk).
STFC
Every few years the department has 1 to 2 students funded by the Science and Technology Facilities Council, working in the general area of Solar and Planetary Science (e.g. Earth Observation).

Other
Each year the department admits a number of students who are funded by various other means. This might include University scholarships, government scholarships, industrial sponsorship, research grants, or self-funded.

Master of Science by Research
Whilst we are not able to admit students directly to a Master of Science by Research (MSc(R)), occasionally students change to this path for personal or logistical reasons having originally applied for the DPhil. A Master of Science by Research degree usually takes around 2 years to complete. A smaller thesis is submitted, for which there is no specified limit, but it should not be longer than the DPhil thesis limit of 250 pages.

Calendar of Events
The dates of term, and downloads for incorporation into your calendar, can be found on the University website (www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term?wssl=1).

<table>
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<th>Date (subject to confirmation)</th>
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<td>Graduate induction and reception</td>
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<td>Burdett Coutts application deadline, and Joint Consultative Committee for Graduates - JCCG</td>
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<td>Michaelmas Term Week 7</td>
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<td>Date tbc</td>
<td>Dept. Christmas party – 1st year postgrads to organise</td>
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<td>August</td>
<td>Student reporting window open on GSR</td>
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Training

**MPLS Divisional Training**

A range of courses on basic skills (e.g. communication and presentation skills, time management, assertiveness, managing relationships) is provided by the Division of Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences. Information about the courses available can be found at: [www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training](http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training), or at the MPLS skills training site on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/skillstraining](http://www.facebook.com/skillstraining)).

A Skills Training Bulletin, giving information about current skills training activities, is issued periodically by the MPLS.

Further information about Divisional training can be found on DPhil in Earth Sciences Canvas site ([https://canvas.ox.ac.uk](https://canvas.ox.ac.uk)).

The NERC Environmental Research DTP runs a variety of training courses students may find useful. Of particular note is the maths and scientific computing course offered in Michaelmas Term to 1st year students. For graduate students not on the DTP, if you are interested in attending, or want more information about any of the DTP lectures or training courses, please contact the DTP Administrators ([enquiries@env-res.ox.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@env-res.ox.ac.uk)).

**Departmental Training**

The department offers a range of activities open to graduate students and postdocs. Training open to graduates includes introductory sessions on: 1) Maths Class Teaching; 2) Tutorial and Practical Teaching and Demonstrating; and 3) Scientific Writing. Training sessions 1) and 2) are compulsory for any individual who will undertake class or tutorial teaching in Earth Sciences.

In addition, we run a field workshop for graduate students and postdocs on leading and demonstrating field excursions. This is also normally compulsory for those students demonstrating on Earth Sciences undergraduate field courses. We also organise First Aid training from time to time.

The department likes students to participate and contribute towards the department’s research and academic activities, such as organizing the graduate conference, group seminars, etc. Not only is this an integral part of researcher training, but prepares you for a research career in which you would be expected to contribute voluntarily to activities such as peer reviews, organizing conferences as well as other activities.

You will also receive any training necessary to carry out your research, which will be organised on an individual basis by your supervisor.

The department is always working towards improving in-house training for graduate students, including training on teaching and demonstrating to undergraduates and scientific writing. We have a list containing details of current graduate students’ interest and teaching experience on the department’s SharePoint site ([https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-HUB-EarthSciences/SitePages/Academic-Administration-Graduate-Studies.aspx](https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-HUB-EarthSciences/SitePages/Academic-Administration-Graduate-Studies.aspx)).

Please contact the Academic Office ([graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk](mailto:graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk)), with comments or suggestions on training, and please keep them informed of any training you undertake.

Departmental seminars take place in the department during term. Attendance at these seminars can be a very good way of keeping up with aspects of Earth Science research across a wide breadth of the subject. There are often opportunities to meet up with the visiting speakers before their talks, or to join the speakers for dinner afterwards – look out for announcements from the member of staff who is hosting the speaker.
The URL for the timetable software will be notified to you by email. You will be able to find undergraduate Lecture Lists online.

Further information about training can be found on DPhil in Earth Sciences Canvas site (https://canvas.ox.ac.uk).

**Library Training**

There is an introduction to the Departmental Library and other Oxford libraries in Michaelmas term. It introduces SOLO (the library catalogue), demonstrates how to use bibliographic databases and where to find theses, Open Access content, maps and geospatial information, and saving/managing references. It is worth attending even if you have been an undergraduate in Oxford.

The Bodleian libraries offer training throughout the year on number of topics, and there is more information on their website (https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ask/workshops#/).

**Research Integrity**

Research integrity is a commitment to creating an environment that promotes responsible conduct by embracing standards of excellence, trustworthiness and lawfulness. The University expects its students to maintain the highest standards of integrity in their research.

All researchers are expected to be committed to ethical principles and professional standards. Not upholding such standards, either intentionally or through lack of knowledge, damages the scientific process and may harm research participants, colleagues, the University and society as a whole.

The University hosts subject-specific online courses on research integrity (www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/mpls-training/our-courses/mpls-research-courses/research-integrity-online-courses), and students are expected to have completed this training before they apply for Transfer of Status.

Further information can be found in the appendices.

**Policies and Resources**

All those involved with research at Oxford are expected to read and abide by the University’s Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure (https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/integrity).

Students in the MPLS Division are required to complete the online Research Integrity course by the time they apply for Transfer of Status (https://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/mpls-training/our-courses/mpls-research-courses/research-integrity-online-courses).

The University's Research Integrity website (https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/integrity) contains a number of additional resources, including links to information on authorship, conflicts of interest, research data management, health and safety, human participations in research, intellectual property, research involving animals, and research misconduct.

Your supervisor will play an important role in helping you to develop skills for good practice in research, and is the first person you should ask if you have queries about any aspect of research integrity. Other sources of support and advice include your DGS, other academics in your department, and the ethics advisors in University Research Services (https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/about).
IT Services
IT Services runs approximately fifty training courses, covering both introductory and specialized use of computers, and common systems and packages. Please seek advice from your supervisor regarding courses that will be useful for you. Details about the courses can be found at: www.it.ox.ac.uk.

They have guidance to help you get set up with all your basic IT needs, such as email and internet access. Their website also provides information and guidance about other services they offer that can help you make your study easier (www.it.ox.ac.uk/getting-started).

LinkedIn Learning
LinkedIn Learning is a library or video based online courses covering a wide range of software and IT related topics, as well as soft skills and business skills. These courses are available to use for free by all members of the University through Single Sign On (https://skills.it.ox.ac.uk/linkedin-learning).

Language Courses
These are available to all members of the University at: www.lang.ox.ac.uk.

Vitae and the GRAD Schools Programme
The Research Councils UK (RCUK) and the Career Development Organisation (CRAC) have a website giving valuable personal and career development advice for postgraduate researchers at: https://www.vitae.ac.uk/spotlight/developing-as-a-researcher/developing-as-a-researcher.

Periodically they run residential graduate schools designed to help you reflect upon and develop the skills you have as a postgraduate researcher. These are well worth considering – feedback from students who have done these in the past has been extremely positive.
Supervision

All projects should have a lead supervisor, supported by one or more additional supervisors. The lead supervisor must be a member of staff of the department on a permanent contract and who is an associate professor, reader, professor or senior researcher, or a member of staff who is also a researcher with an independent fellowship that lasts for the duration of the student’s degree. The full details of eligibility and responsibility for the full supervision team can be found in the MPLS Division’s Code of Practice on the Supervision of Graduate Research Students (www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-and-resources-for-supervisors/essentials-of-supervision).

All DPhil supervisors in MPLS departments who are new to DPhil supervision, or new to supervising DPhil students at Oxford, are required to take the DPhil Supervision in the Sciences online course: www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-and-resources-for-supervisors/training-for-supervisors.

Students should expect to meet with their lead supervisor at least once a term, and have meetings with any member of the supervisory team at least once every two weeks averaged across the year.

Graduate Supervision Reporting

At the end of every term, and again in the Long Vacation, you are required to report on your own progress in training and research by completing an online form in the Graduate Supervision Reporting system (GSR).

Access to GSR for students will be via Student Self Service (www.evision.ox.ac.uk). You will be sent an automated email notification with details of how to log in at the start of each reporting window, and who to contact with queries. We strongly encourage you to make full use of this reporting system.

Your reports do not need to be long, or polished, but they really do help to make sure that you are getting the support that you need as you progress. It is a requirement of the Transfer and Confirmation of Status process, that a preparation form is completed and added to a termly report as part of the process. You will also be able to complete the Divisional Training Needs Analysis (TNA) form in Student Self Service and add this to your GSR reports.

Your supervisors also have to report in the same system; and the reports are accessible to you, your supervisors, your College Advisor, and the DGS.

Suggestions of what to include on GSR

- General sense of progress, including indicators of success but also issues of concern
- Attendance at scientific meetings and conferences
- Attendance at Departmental Seminars
- Organisation of events, both within and outside the Department, social and academic
- Any worries about resources (e.g. computing or in the lab; inability to attend conferences, etc.)
- Any concerns about EDI can be raised here (or separately in confidence with the DGS)
- Any concerns about well-being can be raised here (or separately in confidence with the DGS)
**Flagging concerns**

It is important to remember that flags of minor or major concerns are not indicative of ability to complete a doctorate. They should be used to indicate issues and concerns about a range of factors including resources, data, skills, etc. It is worse to indicate ‘no concerns’ when a simple issue could be resolved (e.g. a training course; more disk space of HPC resources, etc.). It is envisioned that most students will have a reporting period with concerns at some point in their graduate studies.

Student concerns should mainly relate directly to academic progress. If you are dissatisfied with any other aspects of provision, e.g. your supervisory relationship or working environment, you should raise these with the DGS in the first instance, and pursue them through the department’s complaints procedure if necessary.

Supervisors should discuss any concerns about academic progress with the student before flagging a concern in GSR.

The DGS should review all flagged concerns and take any appropriate action. A severe concern should result in a meeting with the DGS without delay. The DGS should briefly note any action being taken to resolve the matter.

- **Minor concerns** – Satisfactory progress is being made, but minor issues have been identified where further action may be required to keep progress on track.

- **Major concerns** – One or more factors are significantly affecting progress, and further action is required now to keep progress on track.

- **Severe concerns** – Progress is being seriously affected by one or more factors, and a meeting with the DGS should be held as soon as possible to discuss further action to get progress back on track.
Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements

If you wish to bring to the attention of your assessors or examiners any circumstances you feel should be taken into consideration it is important that you let us know. If you would like to discuss your circumstances before making a formal application for adjustments, please feel free to approach any staff you would feel comfortable talking to about any problem; we will always try to help. You should always notify the Academic Office (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk) if you are ill, they will do all they can to help and initiate any formal procedures that may be necessary.

Students can request adjustment to their assessment on the ‘Application for Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements’ GSO.19 form (available on the University website: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression). The form must be seen and signed by the DGS, but unlike most GSO forms it does not need to be seen or signed by the student’s supervisor or college, as the student may have good reason for wishing to keep their information confidential to those involved in the assessment process. The people with whom the student’s information is likely to be shared is detailed on the form. This form can be used to initiate the development of a Student Support Plan, if required due to physical or mental illness.
Course Progression

Your progress as a research student is monitored through a number of formal mechanisms.

University progression forms (Transfer of Status, Confirmation of Status, Appointment of Examiners, etc.) are available via the University website (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression). In addition to the forms, the steps of the Transfer and Confirmation of Status process are outlined below.

Graduate Mini Conference

This is held in Week 0 of Hilary Term (January). Any students undergoing Transfer or Confirmation of Status will participate by giving talks and/or presenting posters. We encourage all members of the department to attend.

Smaller conferences may be organised at other points in the year if necessary for students who did not start their course in Michaelmas Term, or who are unable to participate in the main conference for which approval has been given.

One or two students will take responsibility for finding convenors for the presentations, and organising the drinks reception and poster display, in liaison with the Academic Office.

Master of Science by Research

Occasionally, for medical, personal or academic reasons, students decide to submit a thesis for the MSc(R). Transfer of Status will need to be applied for following the same process as for a DPhil (Confirmation of Status is not required), and a GSO.3 form must be submitted to appoint examiners; it is recommended that you submit your GSO.3 form 4-6 weeks before you expect to submit your thesis for examination.

The thesis will be a shorter length than a DPhil thesis, which should be discussed with your supervisors, but as a guide, it should not be longer than the DPhil thesis limit of 250 pages, but may be around 10,000 words.

Suspension of Status

If, for a temporary period, you are unable to pursue your course of study or research, you may apply for suspension of your student status. Relevant circumstances could include illness, accident, domestic crisis, or unforeseeable financial difficulty. Alternatively, it might be essential for you to concentrate temporarily on some other project (e.g. gaining some other qualification) which could not reasonably be deferred until after your postgraduate work is completed; or you might wish to take up temporary work which was likely to be important to your future career, and the opportunity for which was unlikely to recur.

If you feel you have experienced difficulties that have slowed, rather than halted, your progress (e.g. an illness where you are able to keep working but with reduced hours for a significant period of time), you are encouraged to note this in your GSR reports, or contact the Academic Office (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk) so an informal note can be added to your file, in case there is a later request a Suspension of Status or an Extension of Time.

Students wishing to suspend their status should submit a GSO.17 form as soon as possible; in the case of foreseeable circumstances, such as temporary work, the form should be submitted in advance for consideration (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression/exceptional?wssl=1); on or prior to your return, you must complete and submit the GSO.17a form. Failure to return the completed form will delay the reactivation of your student status.

Students wishing to suspend their status for Maternity, Paternity, or Adoption Leave, will need to complete the GSO.17b form; further information and guidance can be found later in this handbook.
**Transfer of Status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil or MSc(R)**

The purpose of Transfer of Status is to ensure that you have a convincing research proposal, that you are making satisfactory progress in its development, and to satisfy the assessors that the work is potentially of DPhil or MSc(R) quality. The assessors will also use the process to assess and confirm the likelihood of submission within your funded period/within 12 terms (for DPhil) or 9 terms (for MSc(R)).

Students **must** complete the University's online research integrity training (an introduction to good research practice) before applying for Transfer of Status, which is available at [www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/mpls-training/our-courses/mpls-research-courses/research-integrity-online-courses](http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/mpls-training/our-courses/mpls-research-courses/research-integrity-online-courses). You will need to submit your Research Integrity Training Certificate with your transfer work.

Students should discuss the budget for their project with their supervisor(s) as early as possible, this should be submitted to the Finance Office ([accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk](mailto:accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk)) as soon as possible so they can help to manage your project’s finances. You are asked to review and submit an updated budget with your Transfer materials. A template budget form is available on the DPhil Earth Sciences Canvas page ([https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/](https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/)).

Although Transfer of Status is a formal milestone in your programme, the whole process is supposed to be supportive, and to ensure that you are on track to completing a scientifically important theses that can be completed within the time available to you.

In terms of the amount of time you should spend in preparation, to write the report and make the presentation should take approximately one week. The report builds on reading and research that you have done, but that research is something that will help form your thesis eventually, and the time taken to undertake that research will of course vary depending on student and project. You should ask for advice from your supervisors if you have any concerns.

One or two students will take responsibility for finding convenors for the presentations, and organising the drinks reception and poster display, in liaison with the Academic Office.

Further information about the timing, process, and requirements can be found in the **appendices**.

**Confirmation of DPhil Status**

The purpose of confirmation of status is to enable research students to receive an assessment of their work by two assessors, other than your supervisor(s). It is intended to provide an indication that if work on the thesis continues to develop satisfactorily, then consideration of submission of the thesis within your funded period/four years (for DPhil) would appear to be reasonable. It therefore provides a second stage of formal progress review in the four years of your overall research programme. It should be noted that successful completion of confirmation of status provides an indicator only for readiness for submission, not for the final outcome of the examination of the thesis.

The confirmation assessment is different to the transfer assessment. The assessors will be focusing on how the research is progressing, the quality of the work completed, whether it is at the right level, and on the plan for completion. The assessors will therefore be looking to ensure that you are making the appropriate amount of progress in the development of your thesis, so that submission will be achieved within your funded period/four years (for DPhil). Primarily, they will be looking to see that your work/research does/will make a ‘significant’ and substantial contribution’ to your field of study. The assessment can also be used as a good opportunity to prepare for the viva voce examination of the thesis.
Confirmation of a student's DPhil status follows a similar pattern to Transfer of Status. The applications will be reviewed by a panel, which will make a recommendation on the Confirmation of Status.

Although Confirmation of Status is a formal milestone in your programme, the whole process is supposed to be supportive, and to ensure that you are on track to completing a scientifically important theses that can be completed within the time available to you.

In terms of the amount of time you should spend in preparation, to write the report and make the presentation, should take approximately one week. The report builds on reading and research that you have done, but that research is something that will help form your thesis eventually, and the time taken to undertake that research will of course vary depending on student and project. You should ask for advice from your supervisors if you have any concerns.

One or two students will take responsibility for finding convenors for the presentations, and organising the drinks reception and poster display, in liaison with the Academic Office.

Further information about the timing, process, and requirements can be found in the appendices.

Preventing to Submit Your Thesis

The University has produced a document (GSO.20a) containing useful guidance for those submitting their thesis; the document can be found on the University website (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression?ws=1).

You may submit at any time after you have passed Confirmation of Status (or Transfer of Status for those on the MScR programme), but do not risk over-running your maximum submission date. The thesis is expected to be a report of a piece of work which is of finite duration: most graduate student funding is only for 3 - 3.5 years (depending on the scheme), and there are sanctions imposed on departments (but not on individuals) if the 4-year submission rates are not sufficiently high. So please, do your utmost to plan well ahead, and to aim to complete comfortably by your maximum submission date. If you are funded by a Research Council, make sure you know when their four-year limit is reckoned to be.

If you are going to overrun the expected maximum submission date, you will need to make an application for an extension of time (GSO.15 form). Where possible, this should be done approximately 6 months in advance of the maximum submission date (e.g. by 3.5 years in to a DPhil programme), and will be considered on a term-by-term basis; you can do this once your residency requirement in Oxford has been reached (you can check this with your college if necessary), even if you have perfectly good reasons for needing to extend.

Thesis Structure

You can decide to submit either a conventional thesis consisting of chapters, or an integrated thesis.

An integrated thesis may either be a hybrid of conventional chapters and high-quality scientific papers, or be fully paper-based. Regardless of the format, the content of the thesis should reflect the amount, originality and level of work expected for a conventional thesis. There is no minimum, or maximum, number of papers a candidate is expected/allowed to include as part of such a thesis and it will remain a matter for the examiners to conclude whether the contributions are equivalent to that which would be expected for the degree. If you are granted permission to submit an integrated thesis, it should not be assumed that the act of publication (in whatever form) means the work is of suitable academic quality and content for inclusion in a thesis, and you should discuss all papers in detail with your supervisor before including. It would be anticipated that you would
be a lead contributor, rather than a minor author, on all the papers in order to consider this format.

Any papers utilised must concern a common subject, constitute a continuous theme and conform to certain guidelines:

a) DPhil and MSc(R) students who wish to be examined through an integrated thesis, should apply for permission to be examined in this way when they apply for Confirmation of Status (relevant for doctoral students only) or by submitting a written request for the attention of the DGS (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk). Requests must include the reason(s), and support from supervisor(s). Normally a request for permission to be examined in this way should be submitted no later than six months before submitting the thesis for examination. To revert to being examined by a conventional thesis rather than an integrated thesis, the student must have the support of their supervisors and submit this in writing for the attention of the DGS (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk).

b) Work can be included regardless of its acceptance status for publication but students may be questioned on the publication status of their work by the examiners.

c) Any submitted/published papers should relate directly to the student’s approved field of study, and should have been written whilst holding the status of PRS or a student for the MSc(R), or DPhil.

d) The collection of papers must include a separate introduction, a full literature review, discussion and a conclusion, so that the integrated thesis can be read as a single, coherent document. The format of the thesis (e.g., style, font, referencing, equations and figure numbering) should be consistent throughout the thesis.

e) The student must ensure all matters of copyright are addressed before a paper’s inclusion. A pre-print version of any published papers should be included as standard.

f) Joint/multi-authored papers are common in science-based subjects and thus acceptable if the student can both defend the paper in full and provide a written statement of authorship, agreed by all authors, that certifies the extent of the student’s own contribution. A standard template is available for this purpose.

If some part of the thesis is not solely your work or has been carried out in collaboration with one or more persons, you should also submit a clear statement of the extent of your contribution.

Further information about integrated theses can be found at:

- [www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students/submitting-your-thesis](http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students/submitting-your-thesis)
- [academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/annex-b-integrated-theses-guidance-for-divisional-boards#collapse1015021](http://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/annex-b-integrated-theses-guidance-for-divisional-boards#collapse1015021)

**Deadlines**

Make sure you know your maximum submission date by checking [Student Self Service](https://student.self.service).

You may submit at any time after you have passed Confirmation of Status (or Transfer of Status for those on the MScR programme).

You may submit at any time after you have passed Confirmation of Status (or Transfer of Status for those on the MScR programme), but do not risk over-running your maximum submission date. If you
are funded by a Research Council, make sure you know when their four-year limit is reckoned to be.

If you fail to submit by your maximum submission date without being granted a suspension or extension of time, you may have your status as an enrolled student withdrawn. Once your status is withdrawn, you are no longer a registered student of the University, and you will not have access to University facilities. This may also affect funding that is granted to the department for future students.

If your status is withdrawn, you may be able to apply for reinstatement using the GSO.23 form (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression/exceptional?wssl=1). There are restrictions on when reinstatement can be granted; these restrictions are explained in the University’s Policy and Guidance on Research Degrees (https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/research-degrees). In most cases reinstatement would usually only be granted for a single term.

**Regulations**

Study the regulations that apply to the preparation and submission of theses. These can be found in the Examination Regulations (see https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.ukNULL), in the sections entitled:

- **General Regulations Governing Research Degrees**
- **General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Science by Research**
- **General Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**
- **Research Degrees in the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division**
- **Research Degrees in Physical Sciences**

There is other useful information and advice in the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Graduate Handbook (www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students). The notable special regulations for Earth Sciences are:

- Students may if they wish submit with their theses, in addition to the abstract required of all candidates (300-words), a longer abstract of not more than 1,500 words for the MSc(R) and 2,500 for the DPhil. Should such an abstract be submitted, a copy of it must be bound into the copy of the thesis which, if the application for leave to supplicate for the degree is successful, will be deposited in the Bodleian Library.

- The text of theses submitted for the Degree of D.Phil. in Earth Sciences must not exceed 250 pages*, but there is no limit on diagrams, tables, etc.; a page is deemed to be a single side of A4. For the MSc(R) the thesis will be a shorter length than a DPhil thesis, which should be discussed with your supervisors, but as a guide, it should not be longer than the DPhil thesis limit of 250 pages, but may be around 10,000 words.

*The total number of pages should include all references, diagrams, tables, etc.

**Proof-reading**

It is your responsibility to ensure your thesis has been adequately proof-read before it is submitted. Your supervisor may alert you if they feel further proof-reading is needed, but it is not their job to do the proof-reading for you. You should proof-read your own work, as this is an essential skill in the academic writing process. However, for longer pieces of work it is considered acceptable for students to seek the help of a third party for proof-reading. Such third parties can be professional proof-readers, fellow students, friends or family members.
students should bear in mind the terms of any agreements with an outside body or sponsor governing supply of confidential material or the disclosure of research results described in the thesis. Proof-reading assistance may also be provided as a reasonable adjustment for disability. Your thesis may be rejected by the examiners if it has not been adequately proof-read.

The University’s Use of Third-Party Proof-Readers policy may be found here: https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/third-party-proof-readers.

**Application for Appointment of Examiners (GSO.3)**

The GSO.3 can be accessed via the University website: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression.

It is your supervisor's responsibility to suggest the names of potential examiners, but there will generally be consultation between you and your supervisor(s) at this stage. If the proposed examiners have not agreed informally to act by the time you submit your GSO.3, then alternative names should also be supplied.

If you are planning to submit an integrated thesis, you must have been granted permission from the DGS before submitting your GSO.3 and thesis. Further information about this can be found in the Thesis Structure section.

If some part of the thesis is not solely your work or has been carried out in collaboration with one or more persons, you should also submit a clear statement of the extent of your contribution.

**Early Viva**

It can take 3 months or more for the examining process to run its course (see note below). If you have a valid reason for attempting to speed up the process, you may apply for an early examination, using the latter part of the GSO.3. If this situation is likely to arise, it is more usual to agree an early examination date informally by discussion between your supervisor and the examiners. Students are not allowed to ask for a viva to take place sooner than one calendar month after submission of the thesis.

**Extension of Time**

In exceptional circumstances students may apply for an extension of one to three terms at a time, up to a maximum of six terms for DPhil students and three terms for MSc(R) students. It is a policy of the MPLS Division that only one term of extension may be applied for at a time so progress of work can be kept under close review. Exceptional circumstances may include, but are not limited to: major technical difficulties experienced with laboratory equipment while preparing or carrying out experiments, or personal circumstances that slowed the progress of work but not to an extent that requires a suspension of status.

Although this is a straightforward procedure, and although we will do everything we can to support you as you complete your research, these forms will need to be signed off by your supervisor, your college and the DGS. You will have a much stronger case if, for example, you have completed your termly self-assessment progress reports in GSR; and if you give the department advanced warning that you expect to need an extension. Please note that we are not routinely able to offer desk space beyond the end of the 4th year.

To apply for an extension of time you must complete and submit the GSO.15 form (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression/exceptional?wssl=1).

**Submit your Thesis**

Research students are required to submit a digital copy of their thesis via the Research Thesis Digital Submission (RTDS) for their examination (https://student.rtds.ox.ac.uk). Your card is linked to your access to RTDS, so you will need to contact your college to arrange for
a new card if it is due to expire before you submit your thesis; in most cases this will only be necessary if you have suspended or extended your student status.

Examiners may still request a hard copy of the thesis from the Examination Schools and this will be arranged and paid for centrally by the Submissions and Research Degrees Team. The minimum time between both examiners receiving the official copy of the thesis via RTDS and a viva date remains at 4 weeks.

**Important Note**
The University will not release your thesis to your examiners until it has received written confirmation from them both that they are willing to act. This requires the two-way exchange of emails or letters plus any other attendant delays. This cannot begin until the GSO.3 and other forms, approved and authorised by the DGS, have been processed. Thus, it will minimise delays if you get all the paperwork submitted 4-6 weeks before you submit the thesis itself. So, plan ahead, and you will get examined sooner.

**Viva**
The average length of time between submission and a viva is approximately eight weeks. It is the responsibility of the internal examiner to make all the arrangements for the viva examination. Your internal examiner should normally contact you to arrange a date for your viva within a month of receiving your thesis. If the Research Degrees Team do not receive a date for your viva within a month of sending out your thesis, they will contact your examiners. **On no account should you contact the examiners yourself except where you have to agree a date for the viva.**

Normal expectations relating to the length of an oral examination should be a minimum of one hour and a maximum of three hours.

More information about the viva and what you can expect can be found in the GSO.20a ([www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression?wssl=1](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression?wssl=1)).
Departure

After you have been granted leave to supplicate you will be sent a clearance form to complete; please return this as soon as possible so that records can be brought up-to-date.

If you clear your desk and leave before you have been granted leave to supplicate, please inform the Building and Facilities Manager as soon as possible so that your office space can be made available to someone else. You must hand back any keys to Reception, and your deposit will be returned.

Personal property may not be left in the department after you have been granted leave to supplicate, and you must contact the Building and Facilities Manager as soon as possible if you wish to request the use of your desk for longer. Please note that we are not routinely able to offer desk space beyond the end of the 4th year.

Submitting a Copy of your Thesis to the Library

Once you have been granted leave to supplicate, and before your degree conferral ceremony, you will be required to submit a copy of your final thesis (which incorporates any corrections required by the examiners) to the Oxford Research Archive (ORA) (https://www2.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ora); in certain circumstances, you may also be required to submit a hardcopy to the Examination Schools for depositing in the Bodleian Library. Details about these processes will be provided with your leave to supplicate letter, as well as how to apply for an embargo or dispensation from consultation. For more information regarding dispensation from consultation, please read the GSO.3c Notes of Guidance (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression).

You are encouraged to submit a copy of your thesis to the Departmental Library, but leave to supplicate is not conditional upon this. The department will meet the cost of binding one copy of the thesis, for both direct and indirect entry research students, for depositing in the Departmental Library (DTP students may be able to use up to £150 of their RTSG for additional copies if wanted, but this should be confirmed with the DTP Administrator). The cost may be claimed by submitting an expenses claim (https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/how-to-claim-expenses-staff-and-students); queries about the expenses process should be directed to the Finance Office (accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk).

Returning Books to the Earth Sciences Library

When you are due to leave the department, please make sure you take books you have borrowed back to the library.

Library material will have a spine label similar to that shown in Figure 1, and inside the book, there will be a bookplate similar to ones shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3. If a book is not returned, you will be sent an invoice for its replacement.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3
Donating Books to the Library

Donations of library material which support the work of the teaching and research of the Earth Sciences Department are gratefully received.

If you wish to donate, please contact library@earth.ox.ac.uk with a list containing:

- author
- title
- publisher
- publication date

Due to space constraints, and the staff time involved, donations are taken on a selective basis. Donations will be added to the library’s collection (as time and space permit) according to the following criteria:

- relevance to the teaching and research of the department
- condition of the material e.g. unmarked, clean, binding intact
- resources required for selecting, receiving, processing and cataloguing the material
- availability of the material in the Earth Sciences and other Oxford libraries
- availability of the material in electronic format

Donations are accepted on the understanding that the material becomes the property of the department. The material will be integrated with the existing stock and cannot be kept as a discrete collection. The donor will be acknowledged on each item’s bookplate.

Material that is not added to the collection, either at the time of receipt or subsequently, may be passed on to other libraries or offered, for free, to members of the department. Where the material is not passed on, it may be sold (e.g. BetterWorldBooks) or sent for disposal. The proceeds of any sales will be used to benefit the department.

Rock Disposal

When your thesis is complete, you are required to leave a numbered, representative selection of your rocks (with thin sections) to be incorporated into the Departmental Accessions Series, which is administered as part of the Petrological Collections of the Museum. The specimens should be clearly marked with your reference number, and you should supply a spreadsheet giving at a minimum, the reference number, identification, full locality (including grid or map reference), geological context (including any stratigraphic information), and the date of collection for each specimen. Please contact the Collections Manager when you are close to completion; they will give you further advice. All other rocks must be removed from your office or other departmental storage when you depart.
Student Representation and Care

Student Representation
The department and the University are committed to hearing the views and feedback from all groups in the department, and the best way for these to be heard and translated into appropriate action is via the department’s committees. We therefore request postgraduate representatives for the following (dates and times may vary):

- Joint Consultative Committee for Graduates (JCCG): Tuesday Week 1 each term, 1-2pm (at least 1 representative from each year group)
- Outreach Committee: Monday Week 2 each term, 2-3:30pm (1 representative)
- Health and Safety Committee: Tuesday Week 2 each term, 11:30-12:30pm (1 representative)
- MPLS Graduate Joint Consultative Forum: Tuesday Week 2 each term, 12-1pm (1 representative)
- Communications Committee: Wednesday Week 2 each term, 11:30-12:30am (1 representative)
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EEDI) Committee: Thursday Week 3 each term, 1-2:30pm (2 representatives)
- Teaching Committee: Tuesday Week 4 each term, 1-3pm (1 representative)

The JCCG is the department’s main committee to represent and hear the interests and views of postgraduate students. It consists of the DGS, the Deputy DGS, administrative staff, and postgraduates (one representative from each year, one from the DTP, plus anyone else who wishes to attend). Graduate students meet at least termly, prior to the JCCG meeting, to discuss any issues. The JCCG meets termly, and reports directly to the Teaching Committee.

It is usually a representative from the JCCG that attends the Teaching Committee meetings to represent the views expressed by the JCCG.

Student representatives on the Outreach, Health and Safety, Communications, and EEDI committees are expected to represent the interests and concerns of postgraduate students in the department, and will be expected to liaise with appropriate representatives on the departmental JCCG as necessary.

One postgraduate student from each of the constituent departments of the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division is invited to the MPLS Graduate Joint Consultative Forum. Student members are expected to represent the interests and concerns of students on all graduate courses at divisional level, and will be expected to liaise with appropriate representatives on the departmental JCCG as necessary.

Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Oxford Student Union (Oxford SU). Details can be found on the Oxford SU website (www.oxfordsu.org) along with information about student representation at the University level.

Disability Advisory Service
The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) provides information and advice on disability issues and facilitates support for those with, for example, sensory or mobility impairments, long-term health conditions, specific learning difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions or mental
health difficulties. Information about how the DSA can help can be found on the University’s website (www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability?wssl=1).

**Pastoral Care**

Please feel free to approach any member of staff you would feel comfortable talking to about any problem; we will always do our best to support you. You should always notify the Academic Office (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk) if you are ill, they will do all they can to help and initiate any formal procedures that may be necessary.

Please remember that in addition to those at the department, you can also speak to someone at your college if you need support (e.g. College Office, Welfare Officer, College Advisor).

**Mental Health**

Members of Faculty and other departmental staff care about your wellbeing as well as your academic progress, and are here to support you. If you are struggling in any way, please do not feel you must suffer in silence. However, shocking you think the issue may be, or at the other end of the spectrum, however frivolous you think it may be, we will take you seriously and do whatever we can to support you. If we cannot speak with you there and then, we will make an appointment. If we cannot answer your questions, we will find out. If you do not feel comfortable approaching an office, please email one of us. Please do also look out for each other; in Earth Sciences we are a close community, and none more so than when we are in the field, so do please keep an eye on your colleagues and offer your support.

The department also has trained Mental Health First Aiders. Currently, the following members of the department:

- Louisa Bailey louisa.bailey@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Samuel Barton samuel.barton@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Roger Benson roger.benson@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Emma Brown emma.brown@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Johannes Buchen johannes.buchen@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Elisabeth Crabbe elisabeth.crabbe@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Darren Hillegonds darren.hillegonds@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Helen Johnson helen.johnson@earth.ox.ac.uk
- James King james.king@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Tamarah King tamarah.king@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Bruce Levell bruce.levell@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Claire Nichols claire.nichols@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Tarje Nissen-Meyer tarje.nissen-meyer@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Stuart Robinson stuart.robinson@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Claire Rylatt claire.rylatt@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Julie Saunders julie.saunders@earth.ox.ac.uk
The University has welfare and wellbeing services (www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare?wssl=1) available to help students, and the Student Union (www.oxfordsu.org/wellbeing/student-advice/) has officers working actively to promote student health and welfare. The University Student Handbook (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/student-handbook?wssl=1) provides general information on welfare, finance, and health, as well as on student conduct and on the running of University examinations.

The University also has a number of self-help resources online here: www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling/self-help?wssl=1. Other online courses are available on LinkedIn Learning, which is a library or video-based courses which are available to use for free by all members of the University through Single Sign On (https://skills.it.ox.ac.uk/linkedin-learning).

### Harassment

The department and the University do not tolerate harassment in any form. The department currently has several trained harassment advisers:

- Emma Brown emma.brown@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Elisabeth Crabbe elisabeth.crabbe@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Darren Hillegonds darren.hillegonds@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Helen Johnson helen.johnson@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Conall MacNiocaill conall.macniocaill@exeter.ox.ac.uk
- Claire Rylatt claire.rylatt@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Emma Smith emma.smith@earth.ox.ac.uk

If you wish to speak to someone outside the Department you can contact the central University office: harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk.

The role of Harassment Adviser is an informal one, and intended to be a first point of approach for members of the University. Any discussions are treated in strictest confidence, and the complainant stays in control of the process throughout. Formal action will only be taken if the complainant wishes to pursue it.

The University’s Harassment procedures for students are detailed at: https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/harassment-advice.
Sexual harassment and violence are any unwanted sexual behaviour which takes place without consent, whether you know the person or not. It can happen regardless of your gender, sexual orientation, race, religion or age. It can happen online or in person. Oxford is against sexual violence. It is never acceptable. [www.ox.ac.uk/againstsexualviolence](http://www.ox.ac.uk/againstsexualviolence) #OxfordAgainstSexualViolence.

Oxford’s Support Service is a safe place for all students to be heard, regardless of age or gender, who have been affected by sexual harassment or violence at any time. You can contact the service by emailing supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk or visit [www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/supportservice](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/supportservice) #OxfordAgainstSexualViolence.

**Supervisors**

The relationship between you and your supervisor in terms of responsibilities and obligations is described in the Divisional Code of Practice on the Supervision of Graduate Research Students. The current version of this document can be found at: [www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/study/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students/supervision](http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/study/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students/supervision).

If problems related to project supervision arise, try to discuss them with your supervisor in the first instance. If you are uncomfortable with this, then the DGS will give advice, and if necessary, can speak to your supervisor on your behalf.

**Mentors**

Please let us know if you would like advice on an appropriate person to act as a mentor during your period of study, other than your supervisor or college advisor. Email: graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk.

**University Services**

The University has a Careers Service and a professionally staffed and confidential Student Counselling Service, which offers assistance with personal, emotional, social and academic problems:

- [www.careers.ox.ac.uk](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk)
- [www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling)

The University website has a general guide to student health and welfare issues, including online resources:

- [www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw)
- [www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling/self-help](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling/self-help)
Safety

Safety Policies
The current University Safety Policies and department’s Statements of Health and Safety can be found at the following web addresses:

- https://safety.admin.ox.ac.uk/health-and-safety-policy

These should be read and observed by all working or studying in the department and are regularly updated. Safety legislation is very strict and lays heavy responsibility on both the department and the individual. Use of departmental accommodation and facilities is conditional upon compliance with all safety standards and practices. Safety legislation is governed by criminal not civil law.

Safety in the Field
All independent graduate fieldwork plans have to be assessed for safety, and approval given by the Department Fieldwork Safety Officer, in advance of any travel arrangements. The department may withhold travel loans if approval has not been given. You must therefore electronically complete a Fieldwork Risk Assessment form in consultation with your supervisor (https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-HUB-EarthSciences/SitePages/Health-and-Safety-Travel-and-Field-Safety.aspx) and submit this by email in the first instance to the Department Fieldwork Safety Officer. This must be done a minimum of 3 weeks in advance of departure. Approval of University Insurance can take up to two weeks and in some instances even longer (for example in the case of especially hazardous activities). You should consult with your supervisor to arrange for a thorough safety briefing and risk assessment before you depart on fieldwork.

You can be provided with a hard hat for use during fieldwork. You must not provide your own unless it has been cleared as acceptable under current Safety Regulations. Hard hats more than five years old may not be worn. Report any damage caused to your hard hat; for safety reasons we may need to replace it.

Travel Insurance
The University has a travel insurance policy, which can be used for all travel overseas that is associated with your degree. For details see: https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/travel-insurance.

Important, and in addition: obtain a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) for travel in Europe. This will cover you for emergency medical treatment only. You can apply for this on line at: www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic.

Fire Safety
Make sure you know the location of the fire assembly points, fire exits, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, and how to use them. The fire alarm consists of long notes with short breaks between. The fire alarm is tested every Wednesday at around 8am, and there is a termly fire drill. Fire doors must not be propped open. When you hear the alarm, close all windows, leave the building, and assemble in the car park area (to the left of the building as you leave through the front doors). If you are in the building, you must participate in any fire drill that is called.
Smoking
The department does not allow smoking or vaping anywhere in the building, including the roof terrace.

Safety Officers
- Jane Barling jane.barling@earth.ox.ac.uk - Radiation
- Nick Belshaw nick.belshaw@earth.ox.ac.uk - Laser
- Joe Cartwright joe.cartwright@earth.ox.ac.uk - Fieldwork
- Ashleigh Hewson ashleigh.hewson@earth.ox.ac.uk - Buildings
- James King james.king@earth.ox.ac.uk - Workshop
- Philip Paling philip.paling@eng.ox.ac.uk - Area
- Luke Williams luke.williams@earth.ox.ac.uk - Biological
- Steve Wyatt steve.wyatt@earth.ox.ac.uk - Labs

First Aid and Accidents
Lists of department first aiders, and the location of the nearest first aid kit, are displayed on each floor. There is always a first aid box in reception and the kitchen area. Report any possible hazards to your supervisor, Building Safety Officer, or the Area Safety Officer.

You must report all accidents or incidents (near-misses) to your supervisor, and, however trivial, must be reported using the online form (https://safety.admin.ox.ac.uk/reporting-accidents-and-incidents).

Equality and Diversity
The department and the University are committed to equality, diversity and accessibility.

LGBTQ+
The University aims to anticipate and respond positively to the needs of prospective, current and former students and staff in relation to gender identity issues, providing a professional and consistent service so that all trans members of the University feel welcome, safe, valued and supported to achieve their potential and contribute as a member of the University.

The Equality and Diversity Unit provides information and support to students and departments to promote an inclusive environment. Details about the University's Equality Policy, information and support that is available can be found on the Equality and Diversity Unit's website (https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/home).

Athena Swan
The Department of Earth Sciences holds an Athena Swan Bronze Award. Athena Swan is a charter for women in science, recognising commitment to advancing women's careers in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research.
Holiday and Working Hours

Students are entitled to take six weeks holiday a year, in consultation with their supervisors. You should ensure you do take leave throughout the year, in order to recuperate and be better prepared for your research. A standard DPhil working week should be an average of 40 hours, as advised in the Government’s Working Hours Directive (a maximum average working week of no more than 48 hours, averaged over 17 weeks: www.gov.uk/maximum-weekly-working-hours). No student should be working above this number of hours, unless they have explicitly and freely chosen to do so.

University Card and Building Access

Your college will issue you with your University Card. The card is widely used for identification, and you will need it for access to the department. You should see reception staff to organise swipe card entry to the building, and your card will need additional authorisation to access to any restricted parts of the building (e.g. particular parts of the lab wings). Your card is also linked to your access to online systems so you will need to contact your college to arrange for a new card if it is due to expire before the end of your programme; in most cases this will only be necessary if you have suspended or extended your student status.

Department Closures

This department usually closes for 10-12 days: at Christmas, over the Easter weekend, and does not open on any bank holidays. Laboratory services and reception do not operate during these times, but there is no reason why you should not work if you wish. However, this must be only low risk and authorised work (following discussion with your supervisor(s)).

Security

NEVER lend your University Card to anyone else, or allow an unknown person entry to the department. Ensure that the door closes and locks when you leave. Do not leave your room unlocked or valuable possessions unattended. Please do not leave windows open, especially on the ground floor. Thieves operate in the Science Area. The security alarm has longer breaks between the notes than the fire alarm. Its use indicates the existence of an emergency such as a bomb alert or the escape of toxic gases. On hearing the alarm, you should exit the building safely, and assemble in front of the building.

Office Space

All postgraduate students are provided with desk space in the department. This is managed by the Building and Facilities Manager. Reception issues keys against a deposit of £30 each. They must not be transferred to any other person. The deposit charge is subject to increase.

You will be charged £30 per key for any lost keys (actual cost). Our keys are on a Master Suite and cannot be cut “over the counter” without authorization from the Head of Administration and Finance. The replacement charge is subject to increase.

NERC DTP in Environmental Research

When students begin working on their research projects they will spend more time in the department and we aim to provide office space from Hilary Term of their first year, although formal transfer to the department is not normally completed until Trinity Term.

Telephones

Your room telephone will receive outside calls. Internal calls can be made from your telephone to all University departments, the central offices, and your college.
**Inspections**

There will be annual inspections of office spaces, which will take place each summer.

Below is a list of expectations for office safety so users know what will be looked for, and can prepare for the inspection.

- Do not rearrange office furniture without first seeking advice to ensure the change is acceptable to the department and also safe. Similarly, you must not bring in personal items of furniture without department approval.

- Any office furniture should be in good mechanical order and properly assembled. Report any faulty equipment in your office to the [Building and Facilities Manager](#).

- Each office should have a good standard of general cleanliness and housekeeping e.g. no unnecessary debris, trips hazards, loose carpet, excessive accumulation of dust, standing water, other spilled liquids etc. Offices should be free from out of date food or mouldy items.

- Offices should be kept in a reasonable tidy state to avoid basic safety issues such as piles of paperwork on the floor or stacks of material potentially falling off desks or onto equipment or electrical outlets. Materials should be stored properly to avoid falling.

- Any filing cabinets, book cases etc. taller than 4 feet must be attached to the wall.

- Walk ways must be free of trip hazards and obstructions, such as cords, boxes and files etc., so there is a clear pathway to the office door.

- Electrical sockets and cords must be in good working condition and not misused e.g. no multi-way adapters or extension leads plugged in to extension leads, no dangerous wiring or damaged plugs. Report any faulty electrics to the [Building and Facilities Manager](#).

- All lighting in the office is working. Report any faults to the [Building and Facilities Manager](#).

- The temperature in each office is reasonable. Report any issues to the [Building and Facilities Manager](#).

- Any personal items, e.g. coffee makers, must be compliant with building electrics and PAT tested, so you must notify the [Building and Facilities Manager](#) if wanting to bring anything in. Any unauthorised personal electric items, e.g. fan heaters, will be removed.

- In shared offices spaces it is expected that each person keeps their things solely within their workspace (i.e. within that desk, drawers and shelf space depending on the space provided).

- Each office must have access to adequate waste disposal - in the room or nearby corridor.

- Chemicals and hazardous waste should not be stored in offices, unless with prior approval from the DSO and stored in an adequate way for health and safety.

If you have any queries, please contact: the appropriate [Safety Officer](#), [Head of Administration and Finance](#), or [Building and Facilities Manager](#).
Libraries
Oxford has a wealth of library provision e.g. Bodleian Libraries, college libraries and the departmental library ([www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/information-and-data-services/libraries](http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/information-and-data-services/libraries)). Your University Card will allow you access to many of these libraries.

When you join the department, the Departmental Librarian will give you an introduction to the libraries in Oxford. This will outline the resources available to you, and other matters you will encounter during your course e.g. ORCiD, Open Access, research data, reference management, electronic repositories.

Departmental Library
There is a library within the Department of Earth Sciences (ground floor). It is a pleasant place to study and contains a wealth of resources geared towards the subjects studied and researched here.

Registering
Please register, either in person or by emailing [library@earth.ox.ac.uk](mailto:library@earth.ox.ac.uk) with:

- your university card number
- the expiry date

Opening hours
Members of the department have 24-hour swipe access. The library is staffed in the morning most days (except Wednesdays), and on occasional afternoons. At other times, Reception may be able to help with access to some library material.

Details of borrowing/returning, loan limits, the library collection and resources, interlibrary loans can be found on the website at: [www.earth.ox.ac.uk/about/library](http://www.earth.ox.ac.uk/about/library).

Contact
Departmental Librarian: Elizabeth Crowley ([library@earth.ox.ac.uk](mailto:library@earth.ox.ac.uk), 01865 2 72050)

Library etiquette
The following guidelines are to ensure the library runs smoothly and remains a useful resource for all.

- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Do not eat, or drink anything but bottled water.
- Use the self-service machine to borrow and return books, even when you are taking them to the Labs, your office or the Common Room.
- Return your loans promptly.
- Leave desks free for others to use – personal belongings may be left in the slots by the outsize books.
- Switch the lights off if you are the last person to leave.

Teaching and Meeting Rooms
Space in the department, for teaching and meetings, can be booked via Reception ([reception@earth.ox.ac.uk](mailto:reception@earth.ox.ac.uk)), though priority must be given to teaching and departmental committees.
In all teaching rooms please only use the whiteboard markers supplied by Reception. If you wish to make use of audio-visual equipment please consult IT no later than the day before.

Working for the Department

Before doing any work, you must have a signed contract filed with HR; this is a contract of employment and is not the same as your student contract. You must also have a right to work check. **Please note that you will not be paid if a right to work check and a contract are not in place before you begin working.** We strongly advise that you contact HR ([personnel@earth.ox.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@earth.ox.ac.uk)) as soon as you are invited to undertake work on behalf of the department. Contracts for demonstrating are renewed at the start of each academic year, and you will need to visit HR again before you undertake any work in subsequent years.

If you are on a Tier 4 visa and therefore have restrictions on the number of hours you can work per week, you can still demonstrate on undergraduate field courses but your supervisor must submit a letter stating that you are not required to be studying at the time of the field course. HR have a template letter for supervisors to complete, but the letter must be signed and returned to HR before you go on the field course. A letter must be submitted before each field course for which you will be a demonstrator.

Demonstrating on the Undergraduate programme

Extra money can be earned by demonstrating for undergraduate classes or on field courses. You may offer your services but it is more usual for a lecturer or tutor to approach you. To express your interest in teaching you can add yourself to the list on the department’s SharePoint site ([https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-HUB-EarthSciences/SitePages/Academic-Administration-Undergraduate-Studies.aspx](https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-HUB-EarthSciences/SitePages/Academic-Administration-Undergraduate-Studies.aspx)).

You may wish to look at the undergraduate handbook to see if there are any classes or field courses where you may be able to offer expertise: [www.earth.ox.ac.uk/teaching/undergraduates/course-information](http://www.earth.ox.ac.uk/teaching/undergraduates/course-information).

Outreach and Public Engagement

If you would like to get involved in outreach or public engagement, now or at some point in the future and would be interested in hearing about upcoming opportunities, please email the Outreach and Communications Officer ([outreach@earth.ox.ac.uk](mailto:outreach@earth.ox.ac.uk)) to be added to the Outreach Mailing list. If you are not on the list, you risk missing a chance to get involved. Being on the list does not commit you to anything, but it ensures you hear about the available opportunities (both voluntary and paid), these may include:

- School visits
- Museum and university events
- UNIQ summer school
- Widening participation and diversity-specific events
- University open days
- Training
- Available grants and funding possibilities.

Technical Facilities

In the first instance, students should discuss their requests for equipment and facilities with their supervisor. All laboratories are in the charge of a Laboratory Manager, Research
Associate, or Technician. None should be used without prior arrangements with your supervisor(s) and the laboratory support staff.

IT Services have guidance to help you get set up with all your basic IT needs, such as email and internet access. Their website also provides information and guidance about other services they offer that can help you make your study easier (www.it.ox.ac.uk/getting-started).

**IT**

There are two mainline IT officers in the department, Steve Usher, who works primarily with UNIX, and May Chung who works primarily with PCs and Macs. If you have any suggestions, questions, or problems with IT facilities, please email helpdesk@earth.ox.ac.uk.

As part of your induction, you will be registered as a departmental user, introduced to the departmental IT facilities and will be given an email address.

Unlike most universities, Oxford has a decentralised computer network. Most departments have their own, semi-autonomous systems which are tailored directly to their research areas, meaning that although there is some level of duplication, overall research is able to be done more efficiently.

Just because the department runs its own network does not mean that the University regulations do not apply, so please read: www.it.ox.ac.uk/governance-strategy-and-policies.

The department's computing systems are logically separated into three components, the research network, which is the one you will be using, the undergraduate network and the administrative network. Each of these currently has separate login accounts, so you will not be able to use the computers in the Undergraduate Computing Lab, for example.

**Facilities**

The department runs six main facilities which you will generally be using; all accessed using your departmental user account, which is separate and distinct from your central University/college account:

- **Email** (both via webmail and via a dedicated client such as Mozilla Thunderbird)
- **Printing**
- **Storage**: You will be allocated 100GB of central file storage space which is backed up daily, this includes personal webpage space. It is accessible from UNIX/Linux, MacOS, and Windows, although Macs and Windows need minor modifications to access the storage.
- **Web services**
- **Wireless networking**
  - EduRoam: Register for a remote access account from IT Services (www.it.ox.ac.uk/work-remotely) to gain access to educational networks around the world.
  - EarthSci: This connects your computer virtually to our internal network. Available within the department only. Uses same credentials as EduRoam.
- **Virtual private networking (VPN)**: Using a VPN gives you access to internal resources such as internets and network folders, as well as access to some library journals, via the internet.
- The departmental VPN uses your departmental credentials and connects into the department’s network. Windows needs an application to be installed, Macs usually have this built-in.

- The University VPN uses Remote Access credentials and connects into central University network.

In addition to the services centrally supplied by the department your research group may have dedicated computers and/or storage space available for your research project.

More details of these services, and more are available on the department’s SharePoint site (https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-EarthSciencesITDepartment).

**Computer Provision**

It is the policy of the department to provide each graduate student with a basic desktop computer suitable for normal office applications when they join the department. If you require a more advanced machine to undertake your research, the department will contribute £500 towards the cost and you can make up the remainder out of your own funds, but DPhilis may not use your Research Training Support Grant (RTSG); DTP students may be able to use up to £150 of their RTSG for additional copies if wanted, but this should be confirmed with the DTP Administrator. In both instances the machine will be procured through the department’s IT team and will remain the property of the department. Desktops should be located in the department, mainly for licencing and warranty purposes. If you contribute towards the initial purchase of your machine, then at the end of your studies you will be given the option of purchasing your machine for a nominal sum, however your contribution for the initial purchase cannot be applied retrospectively.

You must take up the offer of computing provision (either of a desktop or the £500 contribution) before the end of your third term as a graduate student; if you do not take up the offer it will lapse and will not be reinstated.

It is the policy of the MPLS Division that all departments will ensure that graduate research students have access to adequate personal computing resources to enable them to work effectively on their projects. The computing facilities provided may vary from department to department and group to group, dictated by specific needs for that group and the tools required.

You should discuss what computing facilities are available to you with your supervisor(s). If you are unhappy with your computing provision, you should let your supervisor(s) know, and if this issue is not resolved satisfactorily you should raise the issue with the DGS.

**Software**

If you require software you may be able to purchase what you need through the department or through the University; information about this can be found on the department’s SharePoint site (https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-EarthSciencesITDepartment) and on the University website (www.it.ox.ac.uk/get-software).

If you need to use your own computer for your research, i.e. one not purchased by the department, you may be limited on what software can be installed for you and you may have to purchase what you need yourself.

**Photocopiers, scanners, and printers**

To use the machines, you will need to register your University Card using the PIN given to you with your Earth Sciences username and password.

Photocopiers are on the ground and third floors. You will not be charged for copies, but records of usage will be kept, and poster printing is also available in-house.
A3 and A4 scanning to PDF is available on the third floor.

**Data Security**

- **Research Computing and backing up work**

It is your responsibility to make sure that your work is backed up. If you store your data on the central file store then it is backed up daily. Research groups’ own file stores are their responsibility and you should check with them what their data security policy is.

Your data is your most valuable and possibly irreplaceable asset; make sure that you know how to back it up safely and in multiple places, preferably with archived older copies just in case of virus infection.

- **Viruses**

Viruses and “Trojan horse” programs are a real threat, even on Macs.

Anti-virus software is reactive and not a total guard against infection, so it is important to be wary and to **never** download and run a program from an untrusted source. It may look like a good idea at the time but could put all your work at risk.

- **Passwords**

If you use the same password for multiple sites and one is hacked you are vulnerable everywhere.

Beware of cyber cafés as they may have key-loggers installed which will harvest your passwords.

When accessing your bank etc. never store the password in the browser and preferably use a “private” window and close the browser directly afterwards.

Never give anyone else your password. No one in the University will ask you to e-mail such things to them so report phishing attempts targeting University credentials to phishing@infosec.ox.ac.uk and include the original phishing email as an attachment.

- **Portable storage**

USB “thumb” drives are very easy to lose (or put through the washing machine), so do not keep anything important or sensitive on them. Just keep them for temporary storage to transfer them between computers.

USB hard disks seem robust but are susceptible to bumps and shocks and often only last a couple of years.

Dropbox, iCloud etc. are convenient but can be a security risk and may store sensitive data outside of the EU, which can breach data laws. Computers fully integrated with department network storage cannot have Dropbox installed upon them for this reason. Purchasing individual Cloud services can be deemed taxable by HMRC, so the University equivalent that should be used by all is OneDrive for Business. For more information, please see: https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/what-is-onedrive-for-business.

**Workshop Facilities**

- **Basement Workshop**: For requests for work to be carried out in the Basement Workshop, contact the Workshop Manager. Requests must be accompanied by support from your supervisor and authorisation by the Head of Administration and Finance. You are not permitted to use workshop machinery, borrow tools, etc., under any circumstances.
• **Equipment:** See your supervisor about any equipment needs. **Equipment may not be removed from any area without the permission of the Head of Administration and Finance.** The location of all equipment is recorded in the department inventory, which is subject to irregular inspection by our accountants. You must have permission to use any hazardous machinery or electrical hand tools e.g. in the Workshop.

• **Ionising Radiation:** If your work takes you into laboratories where ionising radiation is used, you **must** be registered as a radiation worker, contact the Radiation Protection Supervisor.

• Students should feel that they can approach the appropriate technicians with requests for use of specific pieces of equipment, but it should be borne in mind that there are many competing demands on the technicians’ time and expertise, and that the department runs a relatively lean support service that is sometimes fully stretched. It may not always be possible to provide the services that would be ideal.

**Geological Facilities**

The [Geological Facilities Manager](#) should be approached initially with any requests. For specific laboratories and facilities, see contacts listed below.

• **Optics Laboratory:** Contains a range of incident and transmitted light microscopes including epi-fluorescence and cathodo-luminescence and digital imaging equipment. For initial booking and training, contact the [Geological Facilities Manager](#).

• **Electron Beam Laboratories:** The department possesses an FEI Quanta-FEG electron microscope together with and a Cameca SX5-FEG electron microprobe (~January 2016) and a large volume carbon evaporator for sample coating. For initial training and booking please contact the [Geochemistry Laboratory Manager](#) or the [Geological Facilities Manager](#).

• **Macropalaeobiology Laboratory:** Contains equipment for the study of computed tomography (CT) datasets, digitisation of three-dimensional landmarks, and optical imaging of palaeontological samples at a variety of scales. For use of equipment and facilities contact the [Geological Facilities Manager](#).

• **Rock Crushing Laboratory:** Contains equipment for splitting, powdering and sieving. For use of the equipment and facilities, contact the [Geological Facilities Manager](#).

• **Rock Preparation Laboratories** (rock cutting, polishing and thin section preparation): Work must be detailed on the appropriate form (available from the laboratory and administration). For use of the equipment and facilities contact the [Geological Facilities Manager](#).

**Online Booking**

• **X-ray fluorescence:** The Open University provides an X-ray fluorescence facility. Requests should be agreed with your supervisor and approved in advance by the Head of Administration and Finance.

• There is an online booking facility available for the SEM. Please contact the [ICP Laboratory Manager](#), for technical advice and booking for the ICP-MS and Sector-Field ICP instruments.

A list of the main equipment within the department is detailed in the [appendices](#).
Note: It is important to negotiate scheduling and costs with supervisors and support staff in advance of use of facilities or equipment.

- **Formal training and sign off:** The support staff responsible for the day-to-day running of laboratories require all new users of the equipment and facilities to be trained, irrespective of their past experience. Training and supervision will be specifically tailored to an individual user’s needs by the person in charge of that facility. You and your supervisor(s) should liaise with laboratory managers before starting work.

**Rock Acquisition, Storage and Disposal**

Depending on your project, you may need to collect sample material from the field for study in Oxford. This requires thought and advance planning to find the ideal balance between collecting enough of the right material to achieve your scientific objectives, yet not over-collecting, which can lead to excessive transportation costs, wastage of resources, and storage problems in the department.

Discuss your sampling strategy with your supervisor. Samples for geochemical or isotopic study have an ideal size determined largely by the analytical technique. Samples purely for petrographic study and in-situ microanalysis can be kept small. Trim waste and weathered material in the field.

See your supervisor for any matters regarding rock storage. A very limited amount of space is available in the department basement. Any rock specimens placed in storage should be boxed, the box clearly labelled with the owner’s name. Different sized boxes are available in the store. Unlabelled material is in ever-present danger of being thrown out.

Please see the Finance Office about importing rocks. **Keep all documents and make the arrangements before** you leave for your fieldwork. Rocks must be imported by the cheapest possible means – but plan this in advance, and work out how you are going to pay for it with your supervisor before you go into the field. Bear in mind that you will probably need special permission (e.g. from DEFRA) to import water, soil and biological materials from abroad. This permission may take some months to put in place, so plan ahead. Equipment that is taken into/out of the country for fieldwork will need to be insured, and may need to be declared for customs purposes. Again, plan ahead.

When your thesis is complete, you are required to leave a numbered, representative selection of your rocks (with thin sections) to be incorporated into the Departmental Accessions Series, which is administered as part of the Petrological Collections of the Museum. The specimens should be clearly marked with your reference number, and you should supply a spreadsheet giving at a *minimum*, the reference number, identification, full locality (including grid or map reference), geological context (including any stratigraphic information), and the date of collection for each specimen. Please contact the Collections Manager when you are close to completion; they will give you further advice. **All other rocks must be removed from your office or other departmental storage when you depart.**

**Supplies**

Supplies should be ordered through the finance system by raising a requisition form approved by your supervisor. See details under **Financial Matters** section.

For general stationery, please see Reception.

**Recycling**

There are recycling points around the building that will take paper, cardboard, cans and plastic bottles. Glass (bottle) recycling is available in the Researchers Common Room (RCR, level 05). Confidential papers that need to be shredded can be placed in the grey plastic bin in the post room on the ground floor.
**Green Impact**

Since the scheme was launched we have been awarded Bronze, Silver, and in 2016 we achieved a Gold award for the building and the laboratories. This was achieved by commitment from all members of the department in various ways, for example, our efforts towards reducing waste, recycling, and other initiatives for saving energy and reducing our carbon footprints.

In 2019 the department formed a new team to be the department’s ambassadors for Green Impact and they have been working with everyone in the department to reduce waste and our carbon footprint. If you would like further information regarding the Green Impact Initiative then contact the **Building and Facilities Manager**.

**Cleaning**

Cleaners are employed to undertake normal cleaning, and are not able to move papers, rocks etc., in your room. If you need to dispose of a large amount of rubbish, please contact the **Building and Facilities Manager**.

**Catering**

There is a (self-service) coffee machine in the Researchers Common Room (RCR) on level 05, and a tap for both hot and chilled water. Coffee and tea are available in the RCR from about 11am Monday to Friday. **Those who bring their own meals to prepare and eat in the kitchen area are asked to put crockery and cutlery in the dishwasher, or wash, dry, and put them away, rather than leave anything soaking in the sink.** There is also a vending machine on the ground floor, and a smaller coffee machine on level 02.

**Mail**

Incoming post is placed by room number in the postgraduate pigeonholes on the ground floor.

Internal post is collected from Reception by messenger for delivery to other departments/colleges twice daily (no stamp needed).

Outgoing mail is collected twice a day by the University Mail staff at roughly 11.00am and 2.00pm. Please leave all mail in the trays provided and write your initials in the corner of the envelope. Please see Reception if this needs to be tracked.

We do not wrap your parcels or dispatch them. Business mail, which on occasions is necessary, should be initialled by your supervisor, or in their absence, by the **Head of Administration and Finance**, or the **Academic Administrator**.

If you are expecting a parcel, please look out for it in the mail room behind Reception. Please collect parcels promptly, or let Reception (reception@earth.ox.ac.uk) know if you are unable to do so.

**Notices**

If you wish to display a departmental notice, see the Reception staff. We do not display notices that might be emotive, political, offensive, etc., and reserve the right to say "no" or remove. Watch the boards for notices of conferences, special lectures, jobs and courses. Observe especially the Safety noticeboard.

**Parking**

**Cycle Parking**

There is ample **cycle parking** around the department, including a swipe-card accessible bike room which can be reached via the back of the building. Please do not use the bike
room to store bikes (e.g. during periods of absence), and keep bikes padlocked. Please do not bring bikes inside the building, other than in the bike room.

We recommend that you should have personal insurance for your bicycles, as these, along with all other personal belongings, are not insured by the University. The University Security Officers can help with secure bike labelling and registration, please contact Reception (reception@earth.ox.ac.uk).

**Motorbikes**

Please be careful with motorbikes and park away from car parking areas, and never in front of Fire Exits.

**Cars**

Car parking space is not generally available, but departmental spaces may be booked with Reception if they are available.

**Fault Reporting**

Report any faults with the building, fixtures or fittings to the Building and Facilities Manager. Never attempt repairs yourself - not even rewiring a plug. The Safety at Work Act requires that we test electrical fittings regularly. Do not remove labels attached to any apparatus or plug.
Financial Matters

Finance Staff

The Finance Office administers student funds as agreed with sponsors. Please contact accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk.

Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)

Students should discuss the budget for their project with their supervisor(s) as early as possible, this should be submitted to the Finance Office (accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk) as soon as possible so they can help to manage your project’s finances. You are asked to review and submit an updated budget with your Transfer materials. A template budget form is available on the DPhil Earth Sciences Canvas page (https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/).

UKRI students will have an element of their award allocated to cover expenses in relation to their research, known as the Research Training Support Grant (RTSG). Students on the DPhil can access their RTSG up to an amount of £1,000 per year for 4 years for their RTSG (students on the DTP may be able to claim more), to cover field expenses, analysis, and conferences; this can be aggregated, e.g. you could spend all £4000 in year one, but you would not then have any further recourse to funds. Your supervisor has to approve all expenditure from your RTSG.

There may however, be additional strategic funds available for significant purchases, but they will have to be request by you, with support from your supervisor(s) (with a reason/plan for the funds) and distributed according to availability.

Funding Administration

For each sponsored student, the department will receive funds for research, training and other expenses. Your supervisor will have been asked to provide a provisional budget indicating how those funds are to be used and any additional sources of funding supporting your research. It is the responsibility of the department and supervisor to ensure that your research is properly supported, but please check with your supervisor before using project funds. Should you experience any difficulties in your research for financial reasons you should bring this to the attention of the Head of Administration and Finance or DGS without delay.

Students are funded via a variety of sponsors and some are self-funded. For those funded by a research council, the department will directly administer all funds. This means we will pay the stipend and course fees, and manage the funds allocated for fieldwork and exceptional consumables. Your stipend will be paid in four equal quarterly instalments in advance of each quarter for each year of your scholarship, subject to the terms of the funding offer letter. Payments will be made directly into your UK bank account.

Please note that payments to students require bank details to be supplied in advance on the form supplied and may take up to 4-6 weeks to reach your account from the date of request.

Students funded by other means should discuss the administration of their funding with the Finance Office.

Reimbursement

Should you require reimbursement for costs incurred, you will need to submit an expenses claim (https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/how-to-claim-expenses-staff-and-students); queries about the expenses process should be directed to the Finance Office (accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk).
Travel and Fieldwork

Any travel and fieldwork associated with your project should have been agreed by your supervisor and budgeted for. In most cases funds are strictly limited, and supervisors will have provided an advance estimate of costs. If in doubt about spending in association with your project, please consult your supervisor(s) or the Finance Office.

If your fieldwork is funded, the department can pay part of the estimated costs in advance, as some arrangements and payments must be made prior to the trip. You must account for the actual costs on your return with all supporting documents such as tickets and receipts. contact the Finance Office (accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk) at least 2 weeks before you require travel advances.

However, you undertake travel, it should be by the cheapest possible method. The Academic Office can sign and stamp the form for Rail Cards. Rail costs will be reimbursed at the railcard rate only.

Your research may require you to do some fieldwork which will take you to a variety of terrain and weather conditions; it is therefore essential that you have suitable outdoor clothing for all eventualities. Relatively inexpensive good quality clothing can be purchased from specialist outdoor retailers who can also provide useful advice e.g. Cotswold Outdoors, Blacks, GO Outdoors, or an independent shop, ideally visiting in person to check fit.

Parental Leave

The University has a policy on student maternity, extended paternity, adoption and shared parental leave. This policy sets out a framework for student parents’ interactions with the University in relation to data collection, defining entitlement to parental leave, arrangements for return to study, and access to University graduate accommodation and childcare services. Further details can be found on the University website: www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/furtherstudentsupport.

The MPLS Division has a parental leave policy which aims to support women doctoral students in STEM subjects to proactively manage any pause in their studies due to maternity. It is intended to support women to progress through their academic career and improve the representation of women over time in STEM subjects. Further details can be found on the MPLS website: www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/funding-for-graduate-students/funding-for-parental-leave.

Carers Fund

We recognise that parents with young children, or those with caring responsibilities, can find it very difficult to take opportunities to attend seminars or present work at conferences, yet these are important things to do for research, teaching, and career development, and to foster networking and collaboration opportunities. The Department of Earth Sciences offers discretionary funds of up to £250 (per event) to help towards increased caring costs resulting from such activities.

This is open to all members of staff and postgraduate students, particularly those in the early stages of their career, who are attending conferences, seminars and courses.

More information, including the carers fund application form, can be found on the department’s SharePoint site (https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-HUB-EarthSciences/SitePages/Human-Resources.aspx).

Additional Sources of Funding

Please see the appendices for other potential sources of funding for fieldwork, travel, conferences, etc.
**Demonstrating**
You must contact HR before doing any work on behalf of the department; please see the Working for the Department section of this handbook for further details.

**Tutorials**
You may also give tutorials to undergraduate students. Tutorials are administered and paid for by the colleges, and they should instruct you on how to claim payment. We advise that you contact your College Office if you would be interested in giving tutorials.

**Burdett-Coutts Fund**
The Burdett Coutts Fund provides a possible source of funding for travel (e.g. fieldwork), use of field assistants, or attendance at conferences (students will not receive funds towards attendance at more than one conference during their programme). Funds are limited, but every DPhil student is eligible to apply. Priority will be given to first time applications.

The Committee would expect that applicants also apply for any other available funding e.g. college funds or other funding that their supervisor might be aware of. Applications are invited at the beginning of Michaelmas and Hilary terms, and application forms are available on the department’s SharePoint site (https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-HUB-EarthSciences/SitePages/Committees-Burdett-Coutts-Committee.aspx). They include a section to be completed by the supervisor, who then submits the form to the Committee Secretary.
Field Trip

The trip is organised and led by graduate students (we recommend at least 3) and the department contributes towards the cost. The organiser(s) need to complete a risk assessment and submit it to the Department Fieldwork Safety Officer for approval. Once approved the risk assessment must be sent and explained to everyone one going on the trip.

Everyone going on the trip should have travel insurance; students are eligible to take advantage of the University's travel insurance; for information about what is covered and how to apply please see the University website (www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/insurance/travel). It is the traveller’s responsibility to ensure they have appropriate travel insurance.

As the department can only contribute to the cost of the trip and not cover the full cost, it is important for the organiser(s) to keep in mind the financial situations of the students and some may not be able to afford the expense of a trip overseas. Students may also prefer several day trips spread throughout the year rather than a single long trip; a single long trip may not be possible for some due to the increased cost or other commitments. It is also important to plan around study and teaching commitments students may have so a trip held in September may receive a better sign up than one in term time.
Appendix A: Statement of Provision

Statement of Provision for Graduate Research Students

The purpose of this statement is to indicate what a graduate research student might expect to be offered in the Department of Earth Sciences. It is expected that during a graduate’s first term at Oxford, each graduate student and their supervisor will discuss the statement of provision, and the departmental DGS will confirm to the Division that the statements of provision have been discussed with research students in their departments. The provision should be reviewed by the supervisor with the student at least once a year.

Further information and guidance about research degrees may be found in the University’s Notes of Guidance for Research Degrees at: https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/research-degrees.

What arrangements will be put in place for supervising the graduate’s work?

You will have a named supervisor or supervisors, normally as indicated in your offer letter, who will have overall responsibility for the direction of your work on behalf of your department. Typically, you should expect to have meetings with your supervisor or a member of the supervisory team with a frequency of at least once every two weeks averaged across the year. The regularity of these meetings may be subject to variations according to the time of the year, and the stage you are at in your research programme. The Division’s Code of Practice on the Supervision of Graduate Research Students is available at www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school.

What induction arrangements will be made?

You will have departmental induction which takes place at the beginning of your first term. The main induction to the department is provided at the start of Michaelmas Term. Other arrangements will be made for students starting at other times of the year. Your supervisor(s) will arrange more specialised induction subsequently.

What workspace will be provided?

Workspace will be related to individual circumstances. All students will have shared office space. If undertaking experimental work, you will also be provided with bench space in a laboratory.

What IT support will be available?

You will be provided with an Earth Sciences IT account providing services and associated access (e.g. use of a departmental computer, software, systems, printing).

You will be provided with a basic desktop computer suitable for normal office applications when you join the department. If you require a more advanced machine to undertake your research, the department will make a limited contribution towards the cost and you can make up the remainder out of your own funds. In both instances the machine will be procured through the department’s IT team and will remain the property of the department. Desktops should be located in the department.

What experimental facilities will be available?

The department has a number of geological facilities and a workshop available as appropriate to the research topic. The provision of other resources specific to your project should be agreed with your supervisor as a part of the planning stages of the agreed project.

What library facilities will be available?

The Earth Sciences Library (in addition to the RSL and other university libraries, and the centrally provided electronic resources).
**Which research training and seminars will be available?**

Some compulsory training sessions are provided, especially at the beginning of the DPhil, but mostly training in the department will depend on the individual student and project. The department has regular seminars which students are encouraged to attend. These are widely advertised in the department.

The Division is developing further cross-disciplinary provision for key research skills, to share research training expertise and skills across the Division.

The Graduate Academic Programme identifies a need to provide advanced courses in core techniques, e.g. in (non-linear) mathematical modelling, computer programming, and data analysis, in addition to courses introducing the specific area of research. Research seminars are available within individual research groups; department research groups; across the Division and in other Divisions.

You will have access to the seminars that individual research groups or groups with common areas of interest organise for their own members and others. You will also have access to the other departmental seminars and colloquia.

Information about all available research training and seminars can be found at: [www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training](http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training).

**What access to research funds will be available?**

You will find that limited departmental funds are available to assist with attendance at conferences, in addition to any allocated funds via individual research group/supervisors. Students may apply to the Burdett-Coutts Committee for limited additional funds to assist with conference attendance or unforeseen expenses.

**What formal graduate skills training will be provided?**

The Graduate Academic Programme brings together all the training available to graduate research students in MPLS, which means that you have access to a very large number of courses. These include academic courses, research, teaching, transferable skills and career development training. With Access to all these courses, you and your supervisor are able to tailor a training programme to suit your individual needs and interests.

You will have the opportunity to attend a variety of skills training sessions offered by the department, such as Scientific Writing and Teaching Skills, as appropriate to the different stages of your graduate career. The MPLS Division also organises courses and career planning events, details of which are emailed to students via their departments. These skills are taught in the context of the students’ own current interests and needs. GSR allows students to reflect on their development and progress, and to record skills training needs and training attended.

Information about transferable skills training, and courses provided by your department, and the other departments in MPLS can be found at: [www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training](http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training).

A list of courses is also available in the Division’s skills training handbook. These courses are organised by the MPLS Division and make up part of the MPLS Graduate Academic Programme (GAP).

**What opportunities will be available for developing and practising teaching skills (for second- and third-year graduates)?**

The department provides training in teaching skills, and there are opportunities to take part in teaching activities in the department, such as undergraduate classes and laboratory demonstrating, and tutorial teaching in colleges. Information about the department’s training and teaching opportunities is circulated via email.

There may also be opportunities to undertake tutorial teaching in colleges.
You will also be expected to attend the departmental training for Teaching and Lab Demonstrating Skills, and be given the opportunity to attend a course in the field on Field Demonstrating Skills.

**What arrangements for accommodation, meals and social facilities, will be made, on a year-round basis?**

**Department**

Research students are encouraged to congregate in the Research Common Room, at around 11am, during the week. This encourages interaction between research groups in the department.

Departmental seminars and colloquia bring research students together with academic and other research staff in the department to hear about on-going research, and provide an opportunity for networking and socialising.

**College**

Many colleges will be able to provide you with at least one year’s accommodation. Generally speaking your college will provide meals throughout the year, but provision will vary from college to college, especially during vacations, and you will need to familiarise yourself with your college’s detailed arrangements. In addition, there are usually self-catering facilities available in graduate accommodation.

You will be a member of the Middle Common Room, or equivalent, of your college, which is the main social centre for graduates. The MCR provides a common room and usually organises a programme of social events throughout the year. The college will also provide a bar, some computing facilities and a library, and may often have dedicated funds for research (conference and field grants). It also represents the interests of its members to the college through an elected Committee or through elected representatives to College Committees. Again, details will vary from college to college. Graduates are also welcome to participate in all other social and sporting activities of the college. Please see individual college websites for further details about all aspects of college provision.

**Central**

Graduate Research Students may become members of the University Club in Mansfield Road, and participate in the range of sporting activities provided by the University.

**What arrangements are in place for pastoral and welfare support?**

**Department**

Within the department, your supervisor(s), DGS, and Academic Office are all available to offer support. The Joint Consultative Committee (Graduate) provides a channel through which graduate students’ views and concerns can be brought to the attention of the departmental Teaching Committee.

**College**

There is an extensive framework of support for graduates within each college. Your college will allocate to you a College Advisor from among its Senior Members, usually in a cognate subject, who will arrange to see you from time to time and whom you may contact for additional advice and support on academic and other matters. In college you may also approach the Tutor for Graduates and/or the Senior Tutor for advice. The Tutor for Graduates is a fellow of the college with particular responsibility for the interests and welfare of graduate students. In some colleges, the Senior Tutor will also have the role of Tutor for Graduates. Each college will also have other named individuals who can offer individual advice. The University also has a professionally staffed confidential Student Counselling Service, which offers assistance with personal, emotional, social and academic problems.
Central
The University provides a Student Counselling Service (www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling) and Careers Service (www.careers.ox.ac.uk).

Contacts
If you have any queries about your department's statement of provision please contact the DGS, or the Academic Office (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk).
Appendix B: Progress Flowchart for DPhil Students

(Please note that only two attempts are permitted at transfer & confirmation of status)

[Diagram of Progress Flowchart for DPhil Students]

www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students/progression
Appendix C: Transfer of Status

Transfer of Status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil or MSc(R)

The purpose of Transfer of Status is to ensure that you have a convincing research proposal, that you are making satisfactory progress in its development, and to satisfy the assessors that the work is potentially of DPhil or MSc(R) quality. The assessors will also use the process to assess and confirm the likelihood of submission within your funded period/within 12 terms (for DPhil) or 9 terms (for MSc(R)).

Students must complete the University’s online research integrity training (an introduction to good research practice) before applying for Transfer of Status, which is available at www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/mpls-training/our-courses/mpls-research-courses/research-integrity-online-courses. You will need to submit your Research Integrity Training Certificate with your transfer work.

Students should discuss the budget for their project with their supervisor(s) as early as possible, this should be submitted to the Finance Office (accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk) as soon as possible so they can help to manage your project’s finances. You are asked to review and submit an updated budget with your Transfer materials. A template budget form is available on the DPhil Earth Sciences Canvas page (https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/).

Although Transfer of Status is a formal milestone in your programme, the whole process is supposed to be supportive, and to ensure that you are on track to completing a scientifically important theses that can be completed within the time available to you.

In terms of the amount of time you should spend in preparation, to write the report and make the presentation should take approximately one week. The report builds on reading and research that you have done, but that research is something that will help form your thesis eventually, and the time taken to undertake that research will of course vary depending on student and project. You should ask for advice from your supervisors if you have any concerns.

One or two students will take responsibility for finding convenors for the presentations, and organising the drinks reception and poster display, in liaison with the Academic Office.

Process for Transfer of Status

The process for transfer from PRS to DPhil/MSc(R) status for graduate students in the Department of Earth Sciences involves the following steps:

- Meet with your supervisor(s) to discuss Transfer requirements, the budget for your project (a template budget form is available on the DPhil Earth Sciences Canvas page (https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/)), and the Preparing for Transfer of Status form, which is in GSR. You should also discuss who might be suitable to be your proposed internal examiner; this person will act as an assessor for your Transfer of Status, and usually Confirmation of Stats as well.

- Complete University’s online Research Integrity Training (this MUST be completed before you apply for Transfer of Status). You will need to submit your Research Integrity Training Certificate with your transfer work.

- Complete the Preparing for Transfer of Status form in GSR and ensure it is added to a termly report – this form should be submitted either with your long vacation report, or your Michaelmas Term report.

- Approach your proposed internal examiner regarding assessing you for Transfer of Status.
Complete form **GSO.2.MPLS Application for Transfer of Status** and pass this on to your supervisor(s) then your college (do not send it onto the DGS for signing – this is arranged by the Academic Office).

Prepare your written work, updated project budget (a template budget form is available on the DPhil Earth Sciences Canvas page ([https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/](https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/)), and a 300-word abstract.

Your abstract must include the following details (a template will be circulated):

- Thesis title
- Primary supervisor
- Proposed internal examiner (agreed with your supervisor(s), and with the proposed internal examiner)
- Research theme.

Submit transfer work to supervisor(s) for review

Refine/complete transfer work following supervisor feedback

Sign up for a presentation slot AND an interview slot (time slots will be published on Canvas later in Michaelmas Term). It will be your responsibility to sign up for presentation and interview slots and to check with your proposed internal examiner.

Send calendar invitations for your presentation and interview to your proposed internal examiner and either the DGS or DDGS (whichever you signed up with for an interview).

Submission of GSO.2.MPLS form (with supervisor and college signatures), abstract, written work, and Research Integrity Training Certificate **by Friday of Week 10 Michaelmas Term** (December).

Submission should be electronic via your University OneDrive following the standard naming conventions (see [here](#)).

Give an oral presentation to a departmental audience in week 0 of Hilary Term (January).

Interview with a departmental panel.

Following assessment, you will receive written feedback and official confirmation of recommendation from the MPLS Graduate Office.

**Other key points:**

- Research Ethics Approval has been applied for (if relevant).
- Keep a log/record of any permission for inclusion of 3rd party copyright material.
- Keep a log/record of any subject-specific and personal and professional skills which you have already acquired during the course of your time as a Probationary Research Student.
- Identify any skills which might require further development or refinement.
- Keep a record of any other related activities, which have contributed to the development of your work.
Timing of the Transfer Process

The Transfer of Status exercise is scheduled to take place in Week 0 of Hilary Term in the second year at a Graduate Mini Conference, with documentation being submitted by Friday of Week 10 Michaelmas Term, for most students this will be the end of the fourth term of study. All research students are expected to go through the process at this time except under exceptional circumstances. Permission to vary the expected time of transfer must be sought from the DGS in writing (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk), and any such request must have the support of your supervisor(s). Interviews will follow shortly after the conference, usually within the same week as the talks where possible.

The University hosts subject-specific online courses on research integrity, and students must have completed this training before they apply for Transfer of Status. You will need to submit your Research Integrity Training Certificate with your transfer work.

Meeting with Supervisor and the Preparing for Transfer of Status form

Students should arrange a meeting with their supervisor in Trinity Term (3rd term of study) to discuss their Transfer of Status. This meeting should result in completing the Preparing for Transfer of Status form which is built in to GSR. The questions are based on the criteria your assessors will be considering for your transfer examination.

This form must be submitted as part of your termly report in GSR during the term preceding your assessment (for most this will mean Trinity Term/long vacation), and is available in GSR.

Application Form GSO.2.MPLS (Transfer of Status)

This form should be submitted to the Academic Office along with the written work via OneDrive (see here for instructions). The supervisor should complete section 3 of the form, or submit additional comments in writing if the space is not adequate. This is an appropriate place for the supervisor to comment on the student’s progress. This may also be a good time to revise, if necessary, the title of the thesis; the new title can be added to the GSO.2.MPLS. The form can be downloaded from the University website: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression.

The form should be sent by you, the student, to your college for endorsement before it is submitted to the Academic Office via OneDrive.

The University hosts subject-specific online courses on research integrity, and students must have completed this training before they apply for Transfer of Status. You will need to submit your Research Integrity Training Certificate with your transfer work.

Written Work

The written work should consist of either a literature review (approximately 10 pages; a page is deemed to be a single side of A4) of the subject area and the formulation of questions to be answered in the thesis, OR a draft of a paper towards an integrated thesis.

Either would give students demonstrable progress to the final thesis and help identify those students who may need extra support or guidance with written work.

The supervisor(s) can give advice and editorial guidance in preparing the written work. The finished work should be saved as a PDF and submitted via OneDrive to the Academic Office (see here for instructions).

Budget

Students should discuss the budget for their project with their supervisor(s) as early as possible, this should be submitted to the Finance Office (accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk) as soon as possible so they can help to manage your project’s finances. You are asked to review
and submit an updated budget with your Transfer materials. A template budget form is available on the DPhil Earth Sciences Canvas page (https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/).

**Research Integrity Training**

Students **must** complete the University’s online research integrity training (an introduction to good research practice) before applying for Transfer of Status, which is available at www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/mpls-training/our-courses/mpls-research-courses/research-integrity-online-courses. You will need to submit your Research Integrity Training Certificate with your transfer work.

**Oral Presentation**

The oral presentation will normally take place during the Graduate Mini Conference which is attended by members of the department. It should consist of a 20-minute talk (15-minute presentation with 5 minutes left for questions from the audience) aimed at a general audience. You can include appropriate illustrations, and you should combine an explanation of the scientific background to the project, its aims and objectives, and examples of specific activities undertaken by you, in equal measure. The talk should conclude with an indication of future work.

To reduce the amount of delay between presentations at the conference, if you are taking your presentation on a USB stick, we recommend uploading it to the computer before the start of the block of presentations in which you will be presenting (so in the breaks or at the start of the day). You can delete them after each block, or at the end of each day.

**Interview**

Each student will be interviewed by a panel, which would normally consist of the DGS or Deputy DGS and the proposed internal examiner, and may include one other academic member of the department. The panel for any particular student will not include the student’s supervisor. The internal examiner is arranged by yourself and your supervisor. The progress report and presentation will form a basis for the interview discussion, but in addition you will be expected to be aware of research and developments in other areas of the Earth Sciences, such as those covered by the department’s research seminar series.

If you are making good progress, the panel will recommend that transfer to DPhil or MSc(R) status is granted. In certain other cases, the panel may recommend that transfer is delayed, and that you should undertake further work and submit a revised report. The Graduate Handbook of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Division covers other possible outcomes: www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students/progression.

If the panel identify a weakness in your project progress to date, you may be asked to address this weakness before progression is approved.

**What assessors will be expecting/looking for from students at Transfer of Status:**

- That you have a well-defined research project, with clear goals.
- That you are well-suited and able to undertake advanced research.
- That you have good general background knowledge of the field related to your work.
- That you show evidence that the project is likely to yield sufficient results in the time available, e.g. through a plan of work with key milestones.
- That you are likely to submit within your funded period/within 12 terms (for DPhil) or 9 terms (for MSc(R)).
- That you are able to work independently as appropriate.
• That your work to date is of a good standard and quality.
• That you are able to express ideas clearly, in English, both in writing and orally.
• That there is the potential for your work to make a significant and substantial contribution to your field of study.
• That your ideas and plans for future work are clear and realistic.
• That you can defend your completed and future work.
• That you have engaged well with both academic training and professional development/career skills activities. You should also be able to show what further activities you expect to engage with.
• You should have a critical understanding of relevant literature.

**Submitting documents via OneDrive**

a) Open the University home page in your internet browser (www.ox.ac.uk)
b) Scroll to the very bottom of the page where you will see 3 lists of links
c) Under Quick Links you find ‘Nexus365 email’
d) Click ‘Nexus365 email’
e) This opens Outlook in your browser window (you may need to log in using your Single Sign On)
f) In the top right of the window you will find 9 dots laid out in a 3x3 square; this is the App Launcher
g) Click on the App Launcher
h) Click on ‘OneDrive’, which should be listed under ‘Apps’. If it’s not, click on ‘All apps’ and it will be listed there
i) Create a new folder by clicking on ‘New’ then ‘Folder’
j) Name the folder following the appropriate convention: Surname_Forename_ToS
k) Open the folder and upload your documents as separate Microsoft Word or PDF documents, taking care to upload the correct versions. Use the following naming conventions for the files:
   • Surname_Forename_ToS_GSO.2.MPLS
   • Surname_Forename_ToS_Written Work
   • Surname_Forename_ToS_Abstract
   • Surname_Forename_ToS_Research Integrity Certificate
   • Surname_Forename_ToS_Budget
l) Once your documents have been uploaded click ‘Share’ (no need to select the documents: by clicking ‘Share’ without selecting them you are sharing the folder)
m) When prompted enter the following email address to share the folder:
• claire.rylatt@earth.ox.ac.uk (do not use the Graduate Studies inbox as that does not have OneDrive)

n) Click ‘Send’
Appendix D: Confirmation of Status

Confirmation of DPhil Status

The purpose of confirmation of status is to enable research students to receive an assessment of their work by two assessors, other than your supervisor(s). It is intended to provide an indication that if work on the thesis continues to develop satisfactorily, then consideration of submission of the thesis within your funded period/four years (for DPhil) would appear to be reasonable. It therefore provides a second stage of formal progress review in the four years of your overall research programme. It should be noted that successful completion of confirmation of status provides an indicator only for readiness for submission, not for the final outcome of the examination of the thesis.

The confirmation assessment is different to the transfer assessment. The assessors will be focusing on how the research is progressing, the quality of the work completed, whether it is at the right level, and on the plan for completion. The assessors will therefore be looking to ensure that you are making the appropriate amount of progress in the development of your thesis, so that submission will be achieved within your funded period/four years (for DPhil). Primarily, they will be looking to see that your work/research does/will make a ‘significant and substantial contribution’ to your field of study. The assessment can also be used as a good opportunity to prepare for the viva voce examination of the thesis.

Confirmation of a student's DPhil status follows a similar pattern to Transfer of Status. The applications will be reviewed by a panel, which will make a recommendation on the Confirmation of Status.

Although Confirmation of Status is a formal milestone in your programme, the whole process is supposed to be supportive, and to ensure that you are on track to completing a scientifically important theses that can be completed within the time available to you.

In terms of the amount of time you should spend in preparation, to write the report and make the presentation, should take approximately one week. The report builds on reading and research that you have done, but that research is something that will help form your thesis eventually, and the time taken to undertake that research will of course vary depending on student and project. You should ask for advice from your supervisors if you have any concerns.

One or two students will take responsibility for finding convenors for the presentations, and organising the drinks reception and poster display, in liaison with the Academic Office.

Process for Confirmation of Status

The process for Confirmation of Status for graduate students in the Department of Earth Sciences involves the following steps:

- Meet with your supervisor(s) to discuss Confirmation requirements and the Preparing for Confirmation of Status form, which is in GSR. You should also discuss who might be suitable to be your proposed internal examiner; this person will normally be the same person who assessed for your Transfer of Status (but it can be someone else).

- Complete the Preparing for Confirmation of Status form in GSR and ensure it is added to a termly report – this form should be submitted either with your long vacation report, or your Michaelmas Term report.

- Approach your proposed internal examiner regarding assessing you for Confirmation of Status.
Complete form **GSO.14.MPLS Application for Confirmation of Status** and pass this on to your supervisor(s) then your college (do not send it onto the DGS for signing – this is arranged by the Academic Office).

Prepare your written report, thesis plan, poster, and a 300-word abstract.

Your abstract must include the following details (a template will be circulated):

- Thesis title
- Primary supervisor
- Proposed internal examiner (agreed with your supervisor(s), and with the proposed internal examiner)
- **Research theme.**

Submit confirmation work to supervisor(s) for review

Refine/complete confirmation work following supervisor feedback

Sign up for a presentation slot AND an interview slot (time slots will be published on Canvas later in Michaelmas Term). It will be your responsibility to sign up for presentation and interview slots and to check with your proposed internal examiner.

Send calendar invitations for your presentation and interview to your proposed internal examiner and either the DGS or DDGS (whichever you signed up with for an interview).

Submission of GSO.14.MPLS form (with supervisor and college signatures), abstract, written report, and thesis plan by **Friday of Week 10 Michaelmas Term** (December).

Submission should be electronic via your University OneDrive following the standard naming conventions (see [here](#)).

Give an oral presentation to a departmental audience in week 0 of Hilary Term (January).

Put research poster up (optional). Usually there will be temporary noticeboards up throughout week 0 of Hilary Term; at the end of the week please take your poster down. If you would like your poster to be up in the department for longer, you can speak to your supervisor about putting it up on the noticeboard outside their office. If you cannot put your poster up there, please submit it to the Academic Office and we will try to find another noticeboard in the department and put it up for you.

Interview with a departmental panel.

Following assessment, you will receive written feedback and official confirmation of recommendation from the MPLS Graduate Office.

**Other key points:**

- Research Ethics Approval has been applied for (if relevant).
- Keep a log/record of any permission for inclusion of 3rd party copyright material
- Keep a log/record of any subject-specific and personal and professional skills which you have already acquired Identify any skills which might require further development or refinement.
Keep a record of any other related activities, which have contributed to the development of your work.

**Timing of the Confirmation Process**

The Confirmation of Status exercise is scheduled to take place in **Week 0 of Hilary Term** in the third year at a Graduate Mini Conference, with documentation being submitted by **Friday of Week 10 Michaelmas Term**, for most students this will be the end of the seventh term of study. All students, to whom the requirements apply, are expected to go through this part of the procedure at this time except under exceptional circumstances. Permission to vary the expected time of confirmation must be sought from the DGS in writing (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk), and any such request must have the support of the supervisor(s). Interviews will follow shortly after the conference, usually within the same week as the talks where possible.

Please note that Earth Sciences assesses Confirmation of Status earlier in the programme than most other departments. The rationale for this is that this allows time for action to be taken if things are not going to plan for a particular student or project; other departments use Confirmation of Status as a chance to check that students are ready to write up.

You should note that you are required to apply for Confirmation of Status before the end of your eighth term of study, and that you must have taken this step before you may apply for the appointment of examiners and submit your thesis.

If your assessors identify a weakness in your project progress to date, you may be asked to address this weakness before progression is approved.

**Meeting with Supervisor and the Preparing for Confirmation of Status form**

Students should arrange a meeting with their supervisor in Trinity Term (6th term of study) to discuss their thesis plan to ensure they are on track for completion. This meeting should result in completing a provisional thesis plan and the Preparing for Confirmation of Status form (which is built in to GSR).

This form must be submitted as part of your termly report in GSR during the term preceding your assessment (for most this will mean Trinity Term/long vacation), and is available in GSR.

**Application Form GSO.14.MPLS (Confirmation of Status)**

This form, which includes a report on progress towards completion of the project, should be submitted to the Academic Office along with the written report and thesis plan via OneDrive (see here for instructions). The form must include a signed statement of support from the supervisor. This should contain sufficient information for the assessors to judge the student’s progress towards submission of a DPhil thesis. The form can be downloaded from the University website: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression).

The form should be sent by you, the student, to your college for endorsement before it is submitted to the Academic Office via OneDrive.

**Thesis Plan**

You will need to submit an annotated thesis plan, after consultation with your supervisor. This should be no longer than two A4 pages (a page is deemed to be a single side of A4), and include details of what you have completed and an agreed schedule for completion. This document will be made available to the assessors, and should be submitted to the Academic Office via OneDrive (see here for instructions).

At the time you apply for Confirmation of Status, you can apply to submit a thesis with an alternative structure, as an **integrated thesis**. To revert to being examined by a conventional thesis rather than an integrated thesis, you must have the support of your supervisors and
submit this in writing for the attention of the DGS (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk). Further information about this can be found in the Thesis Structure section.

Written Report

You will be required to submit a brief written report about your research achievements to date (no more than two A4 pages). The report should describe what you have achieved (e.g. papers published, courses and training completed) since Transfer of Status. The written report should be saved as a PDF and submitted via OneDrive to the Academic Office (see here for instructions).

Oral Presentation

The oral presentation will normally take place during the Graduate Mini Conference which is attended by members of the department. It should consist of a 20-minute talk (15-minute presentation with 5 minutes left for questions from the audience) aimed at a general audience. The presentation should be an update on the progress made since Transfer of Status with appropriate illustrations.

To reduce the amount of delay between presentations at the conference, if you are taking your presentation on a USB stick, we recommend uploading it to the computer before the start of the block of presentations in which you will be presenting (so in the breaks or at the start of the day). You can delete them after each block, or at the end of each day.

Poster Presentation

The poster does not form part of the examination process but is considered good practice and an opportunity to communicate your research project to the wider department.

The poster should be no bigger than A0 (portrait or landscape), and designed as though it would be presented at a major conference in the student’s area of research. The student should be ready to explain the content of the poster to members of the department at the poster session while it is on display.

Interview

Each student will be interviewed by a panel, which would normally consist of the DGS or Deputy DGS and the proposed internal examiner, and may include one other academic member of the department. The panel for any particular student will not include the student's supervisor. The internal examiner would normally be the same as when you applied for Transfer of Status, however if a change is needed this should be arranged by yourself and your supervisor. The progress report, poster and presentation will form a basis for the interview discussion, but in addition, you will be expected to be aware of research and developments in other areas of the Earth Sciences, such as those covered by the department’s research seminar series.

If you are making good progress, the panel will recommend that confirmation of status is granted. In certain other cases, the panel may recommend that confirmation is delayed, and that you should undertake further work and submit a revised report. The Graduate Handbook of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Division covers other possible outcomes: www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students/progression.

If the panel identify a weakness in your project progress to date, you may be asked to address this weakness before progression is approved.

What assessors will be expecting/looking for from students at Confirmation of Status:

- That your work/research makes or will make on completion and submission, a ‘significant and substantial contribution’ to your field of study.
• That you have to date undertaken advanced research.
• That you have sufficient background and in-depth knowledge of the field related to your work.
• That you show evidence that the project has yielded sufficient results to date and within the time remaining, e.g. through a plan of work, which includes a timetable for writing up.
• That you are likely to submit a satisfactory thesis within your funded period/within 12 terms.
• That you are working as an independent researcher as appropriate.
• That your work to date is of a good standard and quality.
• That you are able to express ideas clearly, in English, both in writing and orally.
• That your ideas and plans for completing your research/thesis are clear and realistic.
• That you can defend your completed and future work.
• That you have engaged well with both academic training and professional development/career skills activities. You should also be able to show what further activities you expect to engage with, and that you have considered your career post DPhil.
• You should have a critical understanding of the relevant literature.

**Submitting documents via OneDrive**

a) Open the University home page in your internet browser ([www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk))
b) Scroll to the very bottom of the page where you will see 3 lists of links
c) Under Quick Links you find ‘Nexus365 email’
d) Click ‘Nexus365 email’
e) This opens Outlook in your browser window (you may need to log in using your Single Sign On)
f) In the top right of the window you will find 9 dots laid out in a 3x3 square; this is the App Launcher
g) Click on the App Launcher
h) Click on ‘OneDrive’, which should be listed under ‘Apps’. If it's not, click on ‘All apps’ and it will be listed there
i) Create a new folder by clicking on ‘New’ then ‘Folder’
j) Name the folder following the appropriate convention: Surname_Forename_CoS
k) Open the folder and upload your documents as separate Microsoft Word or PDF documents, taking care to upload the correct versions. Use the following naming conventions for the files:
   - Surname_Forename_CoS_GSO.14.MPLS
   - Surname_Forename_CoS_Written Report
- Surname_Forename_CoS_Abstract
- Surname_Forename_CoS_Thesis Plan
- Surname_Forename_CoS_Research Integrity Certificate

**NOTE:** The Research Integrity Certificate is only required as part of your Confirmation submission if you did not provide the certificate when you applied for Transfer of Status.

l) Once your documents have been uploaded click ‘Share’ (no need to select the documents: by clicking ‘Share’ without selecting them you are sharing the folder)

m) When prompted enter the following email address to share the folder:
   - **claire.rylatt@earth.ox.ac.uk** (do not use the Graduate Studies inbox as that does not have OneDrive)

n) Click ‘Send’
Appendix E: Digital Theses

Digital Theses
Please read this information carefully. It provides a brief summary of the main issues surrounding digital theses of which research students should be aware. For further information see https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digitaltheses.

Further information can be found on the Bodleian Libraries website: www2.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ora/about.

Oxford Digital Theses
The University of Oxford is committed to the dissemination of its research, and in support of this commitment provides the Oxford University Research Archive (ORA). ORA was established in 2007 as a permanent and secure online archive of research materials produced by members of the University of Oxford.

It provides a single point of public access to electronic copies of peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings by Oxford authors and Oxford research theses, created in fulfilment of University of Oxford Awards. This also provides a means for institutional compliance with funders’ Open Access requirements.

When to Deposit your e-thesis
Current students must have been granted leave to supplicate following examination of their thesis to be eligible for deposit.

Theses should be deposited in good time (a minimum of five working days) in advance of graduation so that they can be processed by the ORA team.

Version
The deposited digital copy should be the finalised copy of the thesis, as approved by the examiners.

How to Deposit your Thesis
Go to https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digitaltheses/how_to_deposit and follow the instructions.

Sensitive Content in Digital Theses
When depositing digital copies of theses into ORA it is crucial to take steps to ensure that sensitive information not intended for public release is not inadvertently made freely available on the open Internet. Errors could result in serious consequences for the University or third parties which could be of a legal, personal or financial nature. Guidelines are available online (https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digitaltheses/sensitive_content).

Dispensation from Consultation
There may be good reasons why your thesis cannot be made publicly available. For example, it might contain confidential, sensitive or commercial information, infringe copyright, or there may be concerns about pre-publication. If this is the case you should apply for dispensation from consultation using form GSO.3c available from www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression. Your request will be considered by members of your faculty in line with faculty policy. Contact your supervisor or Research Services if you are unsure about these matters. Formal dispensation is required for students following academic programmes requiring deposit of the thesis:

Students should apply for dispensation using form GSO.3c if their thesis contains sensitive or copyright information or have pre-publication concerns.
Once dispensation from consultation has been granted, the period of restricted access should be indicated on the ORA online deposit form.

For more information regarding dispensation from consultation, please read the GSO.3c Notes of Guidance (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression).

**Publication of your Thesis**

The general trend is that theses are becoming freely available via the Internet. Authors may reach a wider audience by making the thesis electronically available in thesis form than by publishing it subsequently in other ways. The balance of advantage will vary from case to case. However, during this period of transition, authors need to be fully informed of factors that affect the decision as to whether to apply to restrict access to their thesis. Authors can then judge the many advantages of open access to their thesis against implications for the ability to publish all or parts of the work as a monograph, journal article or in some other format at a later date. Publishers differ in respect to their policies on this issue. You are advised to discuss this matter with your supervisor.

**Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights**

Information about copyright can be found on the website (https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digitaltheses/theses_copyright).

**Plagiarism Concerns**

Information about concerns you may have about plagiarism and the take-down policy is available on the website (https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/digitaltheses/plagiarism).
Appendix F: Mental Health and Harassment

Mental Health and Harassment

Click here for a list of Mental Health First Aiders.

Click here for a list of Harassment Advisors.

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Nature and Mental health

**Nature improves your health**
Daily contact with nature is linked to reduced levels of chronic stress, reductions in obesity and improved concentration, so get your colleagues outside and help them feel healthier.

**Nature makes happier workers**
Green your office by creating an outside area and encouraging lunchtime walks. There is a 10% reduction in work absence if employees are able to look at a green space rather than a wall.

**Green offices boost productivity**
Adding plants and photos of wildlife (or even playing birdsong!) can help your colleagues at work. Employees are 15% more productive when workplaces have even a few houseplants.

**Nature makes you more active**
Map out local walking routes in wild places for people to enjoy at lunchtime. People with easy access to nature are three times as likely to be active as those without access.

**Green exercise can save the NHS money**
Ecotherapy could reduce antidepressant prescription costs, so encourage walking meetings and exercise in your workplace. Mind has shown that green exercise benefits health and wellbeing.

**Green neighbourhoods cut depression**
Natural features near houses reduce mental illness. Work with neighbours to create wildflower borders and bird feeding stations.
Appendix G: Equal Opportunities Statement

Full details may be found on the University website: https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/equality-policy.

The University of Oxford is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected. We recognise that the broad range of experiences that a diverse staff and student body brings strengthens our research and enhances our teaching, and that in order for Oxford to remain a world-leading institution we must continue to provide a diverse, inclusive, fair and open environment that allows everyone to grow and flourish.

The University embraces diversity amongst its members and seeks to achieve equity in the experience, progression and achievement of all students and staff through the implementation of transparent policies, practices and procedures and the provision of effective support. It also seeks to ensure that its public engagement work and services benefit diverse audiences and communities.

The University recognises that equality and inclusion should be embedded in all its activities and seeks to promote awareness of equality and foster good practice. The University is committed to a programme of action to support its equality policy, to monitoring its effectiveness, and to publishing information on progress towards its equality aims.

The University seeks to ensure that no member of its community is unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, or sexual orientation (hereafter referred to as the 'protected characteristics').

In exercising its policies, practices, procedures and other functions, the University will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and to the protected characteristics, as well as other relevant circumstances including parental or caring responsibilities, contract type, and working hours.

The University will seek to make a positive contribution to the advancement of equality through all its activities. In particular, the University will:

- Encourage applications for study and employment from the widest pool of potential candidates, especially where representation is disproportionately low, and take lawful positive action, for example with targeted scholarships, to improve diversity where appropriate.

- Take appropriate steps to meet the particular needs of individuals from protected groups where these are different from the needs of others, and work to eliminate any barriers to their success.

- In respect of students, seek to attract and admit students of outstanding potential whatever their background, and work to ensure that teaching and assessment provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve and demonstrate their full academic potential. Decisions on the admission of students will be based solely on the individual merits of each candidate and the application of selection criteria appropriate to the course of study.

- In respect of staff, seek to ensure that entry into employment and progression within employment are determined solely by criteria which are related to the duties of a
particular post and the relevant grade; and support career development and progression with the aim of ensuring diverse representation and participation at all levels.

The University understands inclusion to mean institutional and individual efforts and actions to foster an environment and institutional culture in which each member feels, and is, valued, listened to and respected, able to be themselves and empowered to participate fully in the life of the University.

The University expects all members of the University community to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration and does not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation. It has a Policy on Harassment, which includes examples of unacceptable behaviour, supported by a Harassment Advisory Service.

Freedom of expression and academic freedom, as outlined in the University’s Statement on Freedom of Speech, are protected by law, and by the University’s statutes and policies, though these rights must be exercised within the law.
Appendix H: Regulations on the Use of IT Facilities

Regulations on the Use of IT Facilities

Full details may be found on the University website: [www.it.ox.ac.uk/governance-strategy-and-policies](http://www.it.ox.ac.uk/governance-strategy-and-policies)

Anyone who uses IT facilities provided by the University must comply with the Regulations Relating to the use of Information Technology Facilities ([https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/it-regulations-1-of-2002](https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/it-regulations-1-of-2002)), also known as the IT Regs or the IT Rules, which deal with matters such as who may use University facilities and for what purposes, access to data, and what constitutes misuse of facilities. The policies, guidelines and other documents listed below are directly relevant to IT users. Other legislation, policies and standards with which users must comply are available from the Legal Services Office.
Appendix I: Geological Facilities List

Geological Facilities List

Optics Laboratory

- Nikon Optiphoto-Pol: transmitted and incident illumination (polarising and reflectance objectives).
- Nikon Optiphoto: CL.
- Nikon Optiphoto-2: compound, bright field, epi-fluorescence.
- Nikon Labophoto-2: compound, phase contrast.
- Wild M8 Sterozoom binocular microscope: incident and transmitted illumination.
- Q-Imaging camera digital camera with Syncroscopy software attachable to any of the above.
- Zeiss Discovery 12 stereozoom microscope with imaging and camera lucida
- Zeiss Ultraphoto: transmitted illumination.
- Zeiss Universal: incident illumination with single shot reflectance objectives.
- Leitz Laborlux-Pol: with 4-axis universal stage.
- Leica DMRX: incident, transmitted and epi-fluorescence, with point counter
- JCM-5000 Benchtop SEM with gold sputter coater

A number of ‘research quality’ microscopes are available for loan to students – contact Owen Green (owen.green@earth.ox.ac.uk) for current instruments available.

Electron beam labs

- FEI Quanta FEG electron microscope equipped with Oxford Aztec EDS, EBSD, CL, SE and BSE detectors.
- Cameca SX5-FEG electron microprobe with 5 WDS spectrometers and fully integrated Bruker EDS, SE & BSE detectors.
- HHV 306 large volume turbo-pumped carbon evaporation coater.

Rock Crushing Facilities

- Rock splitter (x2)
- Fritsch Jaw crusher
- Fritsch automatic pestle and mortar
- Roller Mill
- Fritsch Planetary Ball Mill (four station, agate and zirconium oxide grinding balls)
- SS White Airbrasive 6500 (airbrasive and pneumatic tools)
- Rotary and reciprocal diamond and tungsten drills, pins and abrasive wheels
• Tema Swing Mill with agate and tungsten carbide rings

_Sedimentology and Mineral Separation_

• Franz isodynamic magnetic separator

• Wet (stainless steel) and dry (brass) 10 and 20cm diameter sieves

• Macro and Micro sediment sample splitters

• Periosonic descaler

- _Rock Preparation_

• Cutting: diamond rock saws

• Thin section Preparation: Diamond and carborundum slurry wheels

• Polishing: diamond paste and aluminium oxide slurry

A list of other Small Research Facilities and equipment within the University that might be available for use can be viewed at [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/facilities/list](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/facilities/list).
Appendix J: Suggestions for Sources of Funding

Suggestions for Sources of Funding

Members of the department have compiled the following suggestions of sources of funding for fieldwork, travel, conferences, etc. This list will be added to as further suggestions are made. If you know of a source that is not listed, please email graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk. you will need to visit the web pages for further details.

University of Oxford

The University administers a small number of scholarship awards and exchange programmes for students wishing to travel or study abroad as part of their Oxford studies: www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding.

Burdett-Coutts Fund


The Burdett Coutts Fund exists for the promotion of the study of Geology, and of other branches of natural science bearing on Geology, among the junior members of the University of Oxford. It was established by a gift from the noted nineteenth-century philanthropist Angela Burdett-Coutts (21 April 1814 – 30 December 1906) who supported Geology in Oxford in its early days, among many other causes: www.coutts.com/private-banking/coutts-institute/philanthropy-and-social-investment/angela-burdett-coutts.

Graduate students are eligible to apply for grants in support of their research during Michaelmas and Hilary Terms. Eligibility for the Fund is subject to certain restrictions, which are explained on the department’s SharePoint site (https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/EART-HUB-EarthSciences/SitePages/Committees-Burdett-Coutts-Committee.aspx).

Earth and Space Foundation

www.earthandspace.org

Expeditions can apply by submitting a description of the project by e-mail (info@earthandspace.org). The Foundation requests all submissions electronically. The application should NOT exceed one side of A4/letter and can be submitted as a Word or PDF document.

Most expeditions are eligible. They include university expeditions and other expeditions from private or non-profit organizations and government expeditions.

European Association of Geochemistry

www.eag.eu.com/education/student-sponsorship

Each year 12 students are sponsored up to 500 Euros per student to attend geochemistry related short courses, summer schools, workshops or conferences located in Europe, except for the Goldschmidt conference. Students do not need to present any talk or poster at the event.

Deadlines to submit applications are 1 February, 1 May, 1 September, and 1 December.

Explorers Club

www.explorers.org

Graduate Students and Immediate Post-Doc grant supports exploration and field research for those who are just beginning their research careers.
Geochemistry Group - Travel Bursaries
www.geolsoc.org.uk/geochemistry

The Geochemistry Group offers bursaries to postgraduate researchers registered at UK universities or research institutions to aid travel to a geochemistry meeting either in the UK or internationally. In previous years, students have received bursaries to support travel to conferences such as EGU and Goldschmidt, as well as a number of smaller meetings.

There are three application rounds each year. These deadlines are 15 January, 15 May, and 15 October. Any applications received will be considered after the ensuing deadline, unless explicitly requested otherwise.

Geological Remote Sensing Group of the Geological Society
www.grsg.org.uk

GRSG provide funds for specific projects via the GRSG student awards.

Royal Geographical Society Student Grants
www.rgs.org/in-the-field/in-the-field-grants/students

Each year, the Society supports over 40 student fieldwork projects, from PhD students collecting data for their dissertation to groups of undergraduates looking to get out into the field for the first time.

Gilchrist Educational Trust
www.gilchristgrants.org.uk

Grants to Individuals: Applications are considered from students who have made proper provision to fund a degree, or higher education course but find themselves facing unexpected financial difficulties which may prevent completion of it; also, from students who are required, as part of their course, to spend a short period studying abroad.

Grants to Organisations: Modest grants are made to applications from organisations are considered if it seems likely that the project(s) for which funds are sought will fill educational gaps, or make more widely available a particular aspect of education or learning.

Grants to Expeditions: The Trust supports a number of small or medium-sized British expeditions, with teams of three or more.

Gilchrist Fieldwork Award: The award is given to a team of researchers with an outstanding proposal for research to advance geographical knowledge, that requires significant, challenging overseas fieldwork.

Sasagawa Foundation
www.gbsf.org.uk/grants/overview

The Foundation’s aim is to develop good relations between the United Kingdom and Japan by advancing the education of the people of both nations in each other’s culture, society and achievements. It seeks to promote mutual understanding and cooperation through financial support for activities in the following fields: Arts and Culture; Humanities and Social Issues; Japanese Language; Medicine and Health; Science, Technology and Environment; Sport; Youth and Education.

The Jeremy Wilson Charitable Trust
www.jwct.org.uk/apply.html
The JWCT funds the following:

- Young able-bodied and disabled sportspeople and athletes.
- Young geologists.
- Young people or groups to participate in adventurous activities in the UK and overseas.
- Young mountaineers.
- Practical projects to conserve and improve access to natural environments, in particular protected areas, in the UK and overseas.
- Sports equipment for disabled people for sports clubs and other organisations.

The JWCT supports individuals and projects directly rather than contributing to other organisations’ general funds.

**Volcanic and Magmatic Studies Group**

[www.vmsg.org.uk/students](http://www.vmsg.org.uk/students)

VMSG awards bursaries for student researchers from the VMSG community. Two bursary schemes are run, one to attend conferences at which the awardees are presenting an oral or poster presentation; and one to support students wishing to attend international technical and field workshops.

The bursary schemes are intended to support students who are active members of the VMSG community.

**The Grey-Milne Travel Bursary**

[https://geophysics.org.uk/gray-milne-travel-bursary/](https://geophysics.org.uk/gray-milne-travel-bursary/)

The British Geophysical Association administers this fund. The Gray-Milne travel bursary provides funding to support geophysics-related work and travel.
Appendix K: Student Conduct

Student Conduct

Students at Oxford are subject to two separate (but complementary) sets of disciplinary regulations: the rules and by-laws of your college provided in your college handbook, or equivalent document, and the University's conduct regulations including the Code of Discipline.

Full details may be found on the University website: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/conduct.

The University regulations covering student conduct are defined in Statute XI on University discipline and come from three main sources:

- the Code of Discipline in Statute XI;

- regulations, issued by: Council; the Proctors, as the University’s disciplinary officers, including emergency regulations for student conduct, published in the University Gazette, notified to you by your college and remaining in force for a set period; the Rules Committee (six Congregation members and six student members who meet annually to review and issue conduct regulations); the Curators of the University Libraries; the IT Committee;

- local rules on access and use, made and published by people or bodies responsible for managing University land and buildings, or operating University services and facilities.

Whether you are a taught-course or a research student, it is your responsibility to consult and be familiar with the Statutes (https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/statutes) and Regulations (https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/regulations), which include rules on non-academic behaviour and academic conduct (including the general regulations and the specific regulations for your course set out in the Examination Regulations (https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk), and subsequent formal amendments published in the Gazette). You should also read information brought to your attention by the University, departments and faculties (e.g. in the Student Handbook, course handbooks or on departmental websites). Students who intentionally or recklessly breach regulations, or incite or conspire with others to do so, may face disciplinary action.

Plagiarism

The code of conduct mentions plagiarism, and in this context, it is important for all taught course and research students within the division’s subject areas, to be aware of, and to follow, good practice in the use of sources and making appropriate reference. You will need to exercise judgement in determining when reference is required, and when material may be taken to be so much a part of the ‘general knowledge’ of your subject that formal citation would not be expected. The basis on which such judgements are made is likely to vary slightly between subject areas, as may also the style and format of making references, and your supervisor, or course organiser where appropriate, will be in the best position to advise you on such matters; in addition, these may be covered, along with other aspects of academic writing, in your induction training. Training is available (www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/mpls-training/our-courses/plagiarism).

By following the citation principles and practices in place in your subject area, you will develop a rigorous approach to academic referencing, and avoid inadvertent plagiarism. Cases of apparently deliberate plagiarism, while happily infrequent in the University, are taken extremely seriously, and where examiners suspect that this has occurred, they bring the matter to the attention of the Proctors. Your attention is drawn to the University Student Handbooks section on plagiarism.
The University employs a series of sophisticated software applications to detect plagiarism in submitted examination work, both in terms of copying and collusion. It regularly monitors on-line essay banks, essay-writing services, and other potential sources of material. It reserves the right to check samples of submitted essays for plagiarism. Although the University strongly encourages the use of electronic resources by students in their academic work, any attempt to draw on third-party material without proper attribution may well attract severe disciplinary sanctions.

Research Integrity

The University hosts subject-specific online courses on research integrity (www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/mpls-training/our-courses/mpls-research-courses/research-integrity-online-courses). This training is compulsory for all University of Oxford research staff and research students and must be completed before you apply for Transfer of Status.

Research integrity is a commitment to creating an environment that promotes responsible conduct by embracing standards of excellence, trustworthiness and lawfulness. The University expects its students to maintain the highest standards of integrity in their research.

For individual researchers, research integrity entails a commitment to a range of practices including:

• intellectual honesty in proposing, performing, and reporting research;
• accuracy in representing contributions to research proposals and reports;
• transparency in handling conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest;
• protection of human participants in the conduct of research;
• humane care of animals in the conduct of research.

There are no universally correct ways to do research. There are, however, standards of practice which apply generally. Researchers should:

• be aware of the legislation, codes of practice and University policies relevant to their field;
• have the necessary skills and training for their field;
• comply with University and funder policies relating to research data management;
• be aware of the publication rules for the journals they want to publish in;
• ask if they feel something isn’t quite right;
• not ignore problems;
• be accountable to the University and their peers for the conduct of their research.

All researchers are expected to be committed to ethical principles and professional standards. Not upholding such standards, either intentionally or through lack of knowledge, damages the scientific process and may harm research participants, colleagues, the University and society as a whole.
Appendix L: Academic Appeals and Complaints

Academic Appeals and Complaints

Full details can be found on the University website:
https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints.

University academic appeals and complaints procedure

Further information can be found on the University website:
https://academic.web.ox.ac.uk/academic-appeals-complaints-and-conduct.

A student can raise a complaint with the Proctors under the University Student Complaints Procedure (https://academic.web.ox.ac.uk/files/universitystudentcomplaintsprocedure2020pdf) in relation to the following:

- University administrative and support services (including departmental facilities and central facilities such as libraries, counselling etc.)

- University academic services and support (departmental teaching, supervision etc.)

If the concern does not fit into the above, then it is likely that there is a separate procedure that should be followed. The student-facing site provides a list of the different avenues available for students who wish to make a complaint (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints).

The University Student Complaint procedure is divided into three parts: stage 1 is a local resolution managed where the complaint has arisen, stage 2 is consideration by the Proctor’s, and stage 3 is a review of the Proctor’s decision by a Review panel member. Both stage 2 and stage 3 are managed by the Proctors’ Office.

It is expected that each stage of the process should be exhausted before moving on to the next stage; therefore, both staff and students are expected to take every opportunity to resolve a complaint before escalating the matter further.

MPLS Division guidance for students on making a complaint and academic appeals

This section sets out what students should do if they want to raise a complaint or make an academic appeal, and who the best person to approach would be. The University’s academic appeals and complaints procedure is designed to ensure that complaints are properly investigated and are given careful and fair consideration. This document supplements the institutional policy by setting out the approach taken within MPLS for local resolution at departmental level.

Definitions

- A complaint can be made in relation to:
  - University administrative and support services (including departmental facilities and central facilities such as libraries, counselling, etc.)
  - University academic services and support (departmental teaching, supervision etc.)

- An academic appeal is an appeal against the decision of an academic body in terms of whether the procedures were followed properly, errors were made, or the process was biased in some way.

For the remainder of this document, it is assumed that a complaint is being raised. The process for academic appeals is similar, although the timeframes are different. See
University guidance on academic appeals (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints) for more information.

**Process**

When raising concerns to the University please ensure that you have read the complaints procedure (https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints) carefully. The University aims to resolve straightforward complaints as quickly as possible using local resolution. The University Student Complaint procedure is divided into three parts:

- **Stage 1** is a local resolution managed where the complaint has arisen
- **Stage 2** is consideration by one of the University Proctors
- **Stage 3** is a review of the Proctor’s decision by a Review panel member.

Each stage must be completed before you can move on to the next stage. Both stage 2 and stage 3 are managed by the Proctors’ Office.

- **Stage 1: Local (Departmental) Resolution**

  1. Where appropriate, often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution is to have an informal discussion with the person immediately responsible for the issue that you wish to complain about. If you do not feel comfortable raising the matter with this person then you should speak or write to the relevant person below.

     > **Who to contact to raise a concern/complaint:**

     If your concern or complaint relates to:

     a. **teaching, supervision or other provision made by the department**, then you should raise it with the **Director of Graduate Studies**.

     b. **departmental facilities** it should be made to the Academic Office (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk).

     c. **general areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole** should be raised through Joint Consultative Committees or via student representation on the department’s committees.

     d. **teaching or other provision made by your college**, you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

  2. If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, for example, if your complaint is against the person who would be the normal contact, you may contact the Head of Department. If you are unsure who would be the best person to contact about your complaint, you should contact the Academic Office (graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk) who will be able to advise you.

  3. The person dealing with the complaint will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally or refer to another member of staff who is better placed to deal with it. If they refer it to another member of staff you will be informed of the person who is dealing with the complaint.

  4. If the designated person who would normally handle the complaint is on annual leave for a long period or on sick leave, please contact the **Head of Administration and Finance** in the department for advice on who the complaint should be referred to.
Complaint Confidentiality:

5. Your complaint will be handled confidentially. This means that people should not be told about your complaint unless there is a good reason, such as those who need to be told for the purposes of investigating or responding to the complaint or academic appeal. No third party should be told any more about the investigation than is strictly necessary.

6. Confidentiality does not imply anonymity. It will usually be the case that the department will need to disclose information to others, including the person (or persons) who are the subject of the complaint. This is likely to include informing them of your identity as the person who made the complaint.

7. You should be informed by the person dealing with the complaint who will be told about your complaint. You are entitled to object to information being shared with certain people, but should be aware that this may limit what action the department can take, e.g. it is not usually possible for a department to take a complaint forwards without giving the person who is the subject of the complaint an opportunity to respond to any allegations made against them.

8. Anonymous complaints will only be considered in very exceptional cases, where there is a compelling reason to do so. Raising a concern anonymously might impede the investigation and communication of the outcome.

9. All parties involved in a Complaint are required to act reasonably and fairly towards each other and to respect the University’s procedures. No one investigating a Complaint should have any conflict of interest in the matter.

When to raise your complaint:

10. Complaints should normally be raised as soon as possible and no later than three months of the matter arising. It is acknowledged that in some cases there is not always a clear point at which the matter arose, e.g. where a complaint is being made about supervision over a period of time. However, it is still important that complaints are made as soon as possible, as this gives the maximum opportunity for a satisfactory resolution to be reached.

11. For academic appeals these should be made within five working days of when you were notified of the academic decision which you are appealing.

12. It is important to remember that there is a time limit of three months for a complaint to be referred to the Proctors for consideration.

   a. If a complaint is raised very close to the three-month time limit and there will not be sufficient opportunity for the department to investigate, the department will notify the Proctors’ Office of the complaint and seek advice on how to proceed.

13. A complaint that is raised outside of the three-month time limit will be ‘out of time’ for consideration, and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, e.g. where you are able to demonstrate clearly that you were unable to make the complaint sooner and within the three-month time frame.

14. If there has been some delay with your complaint being investigated you are entitled to refer your complaint to the Head of Department. If the Head of Department is the person already dealing with your complaint please contact the Division for advice (graduate.studies@mpls.ox.ac.uk).
> Timescales and investigation steps

15. Once you have raised your complaint an acknowledgement will be sent to you as soon as possible and within five working days. The acknowledgement will include information on who will be dealing with the complaint and, if possible, provide an indication of preliminary steps and timeframe.

16. Your department should keep a written record of the complaint, but you are advised to keep your own records and to keep a copy of any written information sent to you at every stage of the process.

   a. If the complaint has been made in writing, the department will clarify any ambiguities in the written complaint with you. It may be appropriate to conduct an initial meeting with you so that all parties are clear what the complaint is about.

   b. If the complaint has been made orally, the department will summarise the complaint in writing and will send it to you as soon as possible with a request to clarify anything they may have misunderstood.

   c. If there are any inconsistencies or points that you do not agree with in any written communication you should note this in writing to the person dealing with the complaint as soon as possible.

17. If any meetings are scheduled to discuss the matter you are entitled to be accompanied by someone, e.g. a friend, your college advisor. You should notify the department of anyone who is going to accompany you and their relationship to you.

18. You will be contacted within ten working days of the complaint being made to update you on progress. The information will explain:

   a. Who is investigating the complaint and why this person is dealing with the complaint, e.g. they are the person responsible for dealing with student complaints of this type.

   b. What the department is going to do to investigate the complaint.

   c. How long it is expected to take, including when you should expect the next update.

19. The department will investigate the complaint, and gather any relevant information/evidence.

   a. You may be asked to provide evidence to substantiate the issues raised, where possible. The department will set out the types of evidence that may be required. This may include independent medical evidence, reports by professionals, financial information or witness statements, etc.

   b. The department will also gather any other relevant evidence from formal records, e.g. eVision, GSR, published information.

   c. The department may ask other parties to the complaint to give their perspective. However, before doing so, the department will inform you who is going to be made aware of the complaint prior to any information being disclosed. This may be in writing or meeting in person. If meeting in person, they will keep a record of what was said for the purpose of the investigation.

   i. If you object to information being disclosed to someone who is required for the complaint to proceed, the department may not be able to continue investigating the complaint or it may limit the action that can be taken (see complaint confidentiality section above).
ii. All concerns raised are taken seriously and any information provided by yourself and other parties will be treated fairly.

iii. Where other parties’ accounts have been provided these may conflict with what you have presented but will also be taken seriously and given consideration.

20. Once all investigations have been completed you will be written to setting out how the issue has been considered or how it will be resolved.

21. If you feel that your concerns have not been resolved, you can take the matter to the Proctors’ under stage 2 of the University Student Complaints Procedure (https://academic.web.ox.ac.uk/complaints#collapse1054176). As part of this complaint you will need to show what steps you have taken to try and resolve your complaint at a locally level, and include any relevant evidence/documentation.

> Sources of Advice and Guidance:

22. Many sources of advice are available from colleges, departments and bodies like the Counselling Service or the Oxford SU Student Advice Service, which have extensive experience in advising students. You may wish to take advice from any of these sources before pursuing your complaint.

Within the Department:  
- Supervisor(s)
- DGS
- Deputy DGS
- Head of Department
- Academic Administrator/Academic Office
- Harassment Officers
- Disability Coordinator

Within your College:  
- Senior Tutor
- College Advisor
- Tutor for Graduate Studies
- College Doctor
- Chaplain
- Dean

Across the University:  
- University Counselling Service www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling  
- Oxford University Student Union Student Advice Service www.oxfordsu.org/support/studentadvice  
- Nightline http://oxfordnightline.org  
- University Harassment Advisor network www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/harassment  
- Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/supportservice?wssl=1  
- Student Resolution Service www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/student-resolution-service?wssl=1  
- Equality and Diversity Office www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop